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MEN & WOMEN
OF THE
English
Reformation.

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THE MEN AND WOMEN

OF

The English Reformation,

FROM THE

DAYS OF WOLSEY TO THE DEATH OF CRANMER.

PAPAL AND ANTI-PAPAL NOTABLES.

By S. H. BURKE,

AUTHOR OF "THE MONASTIC HOUSES OF ENGLAND."

"Time Unveils all Truth."

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PREFACE.

IN writing biographies and incidents of certain periods, authors have seldom escaped the accusation of prejudice. The interweaving of individual feeling in a web so complicated as that in which simple truth is too often confined, has hitherto presented many difficulties in unravelling the *real* in place of its opposite. Hitherto writers of history have mostly dealt in eulogy or depreciation of the by-gone, as well as of the various notables of the period.

To the end of time the past of men must teach the future—to respect, practise, reverence, or avoid. Long before the Mosaic dispensation, the wise men of Egypt instituted a laudable and beneficial custom in their country. It became a law, and afterwards a cultus, in reference to deceased celebrities. The kings and chief nobles were subjected to a *post-mortem* examination of character, in which the reputation of the dead should be submitted to investigation, and the fiat of desert or unworthiness pronounced by chosen censors, without

fear and without favour. Whether the idea was ever carried out in integrity, the mausolea of the Pyramids have never disclosed; nor has Champollion succeeded in elucidating it by the papyri found amidst the mummies, which date from the days of Sesostriis to the time when the hair of an Egyptian Queen was set by a Roman Poet in the assembly of the stars. It was a grand idea nevertheless—rather a noble ordinance, standing not only as mediator between the past and present, but furnishing securities for the future. No station amongst “our fathers by the Nile” freed the dead from the ordeal which must have been, in unsophisticated times, a potent incentive to virtue, as well as a powerful menace to crime. Imbued with the spirit of a law like this, the historian now-a-days should journey. The mile-stones of truth are at hand in our national records; the stepping-off places from the Continental archives are almost as facilely present. Peculiar sources of information have been made use of in this work under the most kindly and favourable auspices.


Placed in such circumstances, an unprejudiced historian, entering on a field not hitherto impartially trodden, may gird himself for his task fairly to record the evil as well as the good qualities, the failings as well as the virtues, of the ancestors of our race, with the humble hope of giving an unswayed book to enlighten their descendants.

Acting upon the maxim of the olden land above cited—free from all feeling in any way, except a desire for the exposition of truth—the author has taken up his

lamp, like Diogenes, and endeavoured, with the best intentions, to discover worth, and hail its presence. Regardless of sectarian assumption, true only to the documentary evidence, obtained by no inconsiderable labour, the following pages are now presented to the English reading people of the universe. Written in perfect sincerity, with all the authorities carefully and faithfully cited, the searchers after truth, daily becoming more numerous, have in the subsequent pages a text-book whereby to judge of a most eventful epoch.

That those who read his work may bring to its perusal a desire to know the truth, as well as the comprehension and candour to understand and acknowledge it, is a condition of goodwill which, at least, will leave an enduring impression of gratitude on the heart of

THE AUTHOR.



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The Men and Women of the English Reformation.

HENRY VIII.

HIS LOVE CORRESPONDENCE WITH ANNA BOLEYN.

PERHAPS there never was a more unwholesome maxim than that which has begotten so many printed and sculptured falsehoods, "*De mortuis nil nisi bonum*," whose perennial misuse induced the noted sarcasm, more true than courteous, of Swift. We have been lately told that if monarchs and statesmen have done great things in their day, we must accord to their sins the "charity of silence," whilst we exalt the "thin battalion of their virtues" on the loftiest point of observation, the sun of eulogy and eloquence shining on the well-ordered array of their few veritably illustrated beatitudes. If this were to remain so, the secrets disinterred from the public records might as well remain entombed, laborious and leal research fold its purposeless arms, and truth lie still unvindicated. For the truth has not yet been written on English history.

The writers of the last two centuries knew little, and feared to tell it: later writers knew somewhat more, but suppressed it, because its publication would not sell. It is a well-authenticated fact, which we can prove, that the history which we now possess with Hume's name attached, is not the one originally compiled by that author. Is it fair to ask us in this age, when the public eye and mind are open to the reception and understanding of truth, when more accurate information is accessible day by day, to forego facts from mawkish delicacy to living interests, or puerile fear of disturbing the dust of dead kings and statesmen?

It is the penalty which monarchs must pay for their special position. The qualities of individuals chiefly concern themselves and their connexions. Each man may have vices or virtues which affect but a narrow surface, and can find refuge and oblivion in the grave; but a king's character is not his own in any guise in which it is administrative. Good or evil, it then becomes an interest of his subjects. He acts incessantly on the morals and manners of the people. In his proceedings he affects the tastes or principles of the community in a mode impossible to other men. Truth holds naught of kings sacred but their persons, for we have a right to speak of those things of which we feel and trace the result upon the best interests of the human family. A king in the fullest sense belongs to history, and his name and reputation fall within its grasp from the moment the tomb has closed upon his corpse. The only question then to be entertained is the honesty with which the task is undertaken. Dead kings should not be more formidable than others defunct; and acting with the same fearlessness that may

be felt with less distinguished subjects, the historian of monarchs' doings may in these days fairly and calmly set himself down to perform the behests of verity.

Never was prince more loved, suspected, praised, feared, and hated than Henry the Eighth in the various phases of his life. Erasmus, who knew him at fifteen, deified him in advance: first, because the young prince could, "from his own resources, and in his own handwriting," indite to the great scholar a letter in Latin; and later, when filled with gratitude for Henry's promiscuous liberality and indeliberate goodness. "Who among private persons is more observant of the laws than yourself?" says Erasmus in one of his letters to the king; "who is more incorrupt? who more tenacious of his promises? who more constant in friendship? who has a greater love of what is equitable and just?" And again: "Who is more dexterous in war than Henry VIII.; or more wise in framing laws, or more foreseeing in council? Who is more vigilant in coercing the licentiousness of wickedness; more diligent in choosing magistrates and officers; or more effectual in treaties of conciliation between kings?" The wondrous little bookworm has excited some censure for his subsequent adulation; but the early eulogy on a Latin letter of Henry reminds one of Swift's trenchant notice of precocious youthdom in high places. "Princes," says Swift, "in their infancy, childhood, and youth, are said to discover prodigious parts and wit: to speak things that surprise and astonish. Strange, so many hopeful princes, and so many shameful kings! If they happen to die young, they would have been prodigies of wisdom and virtue; if they live, they are often prodigies indeed, but of another sort."

Praxiteles has been borrowed from the Parthenon to testify to Henry's personal graces; and Britain produced another Amadis for the "Field of the Cloth of Gold." The Venetian ambassador thus addressed Henry before the whole Court: "If we look upon his face we believe we see an Apollo; and if we contemplate his breast and shoulders, or the other parts of his body, they give us the image of a Mars." How Henry's acknowledged sense could have accepted such gross flattery is but another proof that servility debases its object as much as it disgraces its exhibitors. No marvel that Thomas Cromwell should enter the lists of parasites; but it is a wonder that Henry should permit a creature who lived upon his very breath to make this averment, that "he was unable—and he believed all men were unable—to describe the unutterable qualities of the royal mind, the sublime virtues of the royal heart." This might as fitly be uttered by Henry himself. And, again, Chancellor Rich announced with loud flourish that "in wisdom he was equal to Solomon; in strength and courage to Sampson; in beauty and address to Absalom." The king's reception of this praise was quite worthy of the praisers: he adopted it in the mass, but referred all his great gifts to God. Never was "Non nobis, Domine" uttered with more blasphemous unction. But Henry has not been without *post-mortem* eulogists.

Ulpian Fullwell, in his "Flower of Fame," writing early in the reign of Elizabeth, romances as follows of Henry. It is not recorded whether the Queen paid guerdon for the "elaborate flatness." Poor Ulpian might have known "full well" that the dose was too strong even for the "reverent daughter" of the great

King; and all the subsequent information we have of the author is, that he was never heard of afterwards. He might have been made "clerk of the kitchen," as Thomas Cromwell became Wolsey's "controller," or "steward;" but history is silent on the matter:—

"He always prevailed as a victor, which, without the assistance of Almighty God, he never could have achieved—an evident token that God was on his side, and, therefore, who could stand against him? He was to the world an ornament, to England a treasure, to his friends a comfort, to his foes a terror, to his faithful and loving subjects a tender father, to innocence a sure protector, to wilful malefactors a sharp scourge, to his commercial and good people a quiet haven and anchor of safeguard, to the disturbers of the same a rock of extermination, in heinous and intolerable crimes against the commonwealth a severe judge, in like offences against himself a ready port and refuge of mercy—except to such as would persist incorrigibly. A man he was, in gifts of nature and of grace, peerless; and, to conclude, a man above all praises. Such a king as did God set to reign over England; whereof this nation may well vaunt above all other nations of the world." What a face must this Fullwell have had? However, the most unqualified of Henry's eulogists was Sharon Turner, who wrote some forty years ago.

According to him, Henry had superlatively improved upon all the talents, all the virtues, and excelled man's nature in all grace and goodness. Mr. Turner describes him as "Warm-hearted, gentle, and affable in private life, dignified yet condescending in public; possessed of chivalrous courage as well as moral resolution; profoundly learned himself, and a liberal patron of

learning in others; a lover of peace and the arts of peace; untainted in morals and sincere in religion; respected abroad and beloved at home." And again: "Happily for mankind, Henry had none of the inhuman qualities, the fierce spirit, and persevering insensibility of a great and active conqueror. He took no pleasure in causing or contemplating fields of human slaughter. He had not, therefore, that stern induration of temper which must have predominated in an Edward the Third, a Henry the Fifth, a Hannibal, an Alexander, a Cæsar, and a Bonaparte. In all such persons the heart could not have had its due moral sensibility, nor the spirit any lasting sympathy for its kind."

If such writing be not an utter inversion of historical truth, there is no meaning in terms. The horrible missive sent by Henry to Hertford, given hereafter in this work, in his foray into Scotland to slaughter, devastate, and destroy every thing, oddly illustrates Mr. Turner's assertion that Henry took no pleasure in contemplating fields of slaughter. Titus never issued a worse order to his legions even before Jerusalem.

Such is the portrait whose fidelity Mr. Turner has had the astounding confidence to call upon his readers to acknowledge. However, more eminent men have exhibited eccentricities in this matter, which almost furnish an excuse for what would, after all, seem to be bitter mockery on the part of Turner. For twelve months this religious married prince of "untainted morals," nurtured in his heart an unlawful love for Anna Boleyn. When she made no response to the silent but expressive indications of his passion, he at length made overtures, to which she thus replied:—

"I think, most noble and worthy King, your Majesty

speaks these words in mirth, to prove me without intent of degrading your Princely self. Therefore to save you of the labour of asking me any such question hereafter, I beseech your Highness most earnestly to desist, and take this my answer (which I speak from the depth of my soul) in good part. Most noble King, I will rather lose my life than my virtue, which will be the greatest and best part of the dowry I shall bring my husband."

Flattering himself that he had only to signify his preference, in order to receive that encouragement so often accorded to a royal lover's suit, the King met this coy denial with the confident avowal that "he should at least continue to hope."

"I understand not, most mighty King, how you should retain such hope," was Anna's rejoinder, "your wife I cannot be, both in respect of mine own unworthiness, and also *because you have a queen already*. Your mistress *I will not be*."

This letter is, perhaps, the most candid and honest of all Anna's epistles. Miss Strickland says, "There is a difficulty in reading and understanding her letters, on account of an evident want of sincerity."

A careful examination of all the documents now extant, bearing on the origin of the divorce from Katherine, leads to the conclusion that Anna Boleyn herself was the person who first raised the scruples of Henry. Cavendish, in a letter to Dr. Francis, Wolsey's physician, states that he heard Lady Anna say, in the King's presence, that "it was a pity to see a young man married to an oldish woman, who had no bright eyes or buxom ways in her body." On which "His Highness looketh at her closely for a time, and then walketh away hurriedly, as if some strange thought had

suddenly struck his mind." The exact date of this scene has not transpired, but it is probable that it was about the time of Lord Percy and Anna's love affair reaching the royal ear. Phillips, Dean of Rochester, heard something similar from Bishop Longland's secretary, who was in a position of knowing much respecting the Boleyn intrigues.

Humouring Anna's provident obstinacy, the King be-thought him of divorce from his Queen, and thereupon Anna permitted herself to be again addressed, and a lively correspondence ensued. From these letters of Henry, a selection has been made which will show the reader his mode of wooing, and give an insight into the character in which he wished to be presented to his mistress. In one of his first letters he writes:—

"Mine own Sweet Heart,—I assure you me thinketh the time longer since your departing now last, than I was wont to do a whole fortnight. I think your kindness and my fervency of love causeth it, for otherwise I would not have thought it possible that for so little a while it should have grieved me. But now that I am coming towards you, me thinketh my pains be half relieved, and also I am right well comforted, insomuch that my book maketh substantially for my matter. In toking whereof, I have spent above four hours this day, which hath caused me now to write the shorter letter to you at this time, because of some pains in my head. Wishing myself specially one evening in my sweet-heart's arms. Written with the hands of him that was, is, and shall be yours by his will,—H. T."

In another letter the King takes science into the service of his love. The astronomical metaphor he uses is beautifully apposite to a more virtuous love:—

“My Mistress and Friend,—I and my heart place themselves in your hands, praying you let them be recommended to your favour, and that your affection for them may not be diminished by your absence. It would be a great pity to increase their pain, because the absence gives them enough, and more than I could have thought. It brings to my mind this point of astronomy: as the days are longer when the sun is furthest off, and yet its heat is then more fervid, so it is with our love. We are placed at a distance by your absence, and yet it keeps its fervor, at least on my side. I hope that yours resembles it, for I assure you that on my part the weariness from the absence is already too great for me; and when I think of the augmentation of it which I must endure, it becomes intolerable to me, but for the firm hope which I have of your indissoluble affection for me. To call this sometimes to your recollection, and seeing that I cannot be personally in your presence, I send you the nearest thing to it which I am able, my picture set in bracelets, with the device which you already know. Wishing to be in their place wherever you shall please. This is from the hand of your loyal servant and friend,—H. T.”

Facilis descensus! The King could condescend to relax, and express a humility little germane to his character, when he thought it suitable to his purpose. In this mood he writes:—

“To my Mistress,—Because the time seems to me to have been very long since I have heard of your good health and you, my great affection for you persuades me to send to you the bearer of this, to be better assured of your health and wishes. And as since my parting with you, I am told that the opinion in which I

left you is entirely changed, and that you will not come to court, neither with my lady, your mother, nor otherwise. If this report be true I cannot enough wonder at it, as I am certain that I never committed a fault towards you; and it is but a small return for the great love I bear you, to keep from me both the conversation and the person of that woman whom I most esteem in the world. If you love me with as good an affection as I hope for, I am sure that the separation of our persons must be a little displeasing to you. Though, indeed, this belongs not so much to the mistress as to the servant. Think truly that your absence exceedingly grieves me, though I hope it is not your wish that it should be so; for if I could consider it to be truth that you voluntary desired it, I could do nothing but complain of my ill fortune, and relax by little and little my great folly. For want of time I end my rude letter, with praying you to believe what the bearer will say to you from me. Written with the hand of him who is wholly your servant,—H. T.”

On receiving the present of a jewel from his mistress, Henry rewards her with an effusion in which love and hypocrisy are rarely mingled. Appealing to God for aid to commit a dastardly crime against his noble and virtuous wife, can scarcely be set down, even by writers like Sharon Turner, as one of the proofs of Henry’s “sincere religion”:—

“For a present so charming, that nothing in the world could be more so, I most cordially thank you, not only for the fine diamond, and the ship in which the solitary damsel is in such distress, but principally for the sweet interpretation and too humble submission used in the case by your benignity. I know well that

it would be very difficult actually to merit this, unless I could be aided by your great humanity and favour, which I have sought and do seek for ; and I will seek by all the kindness that I can show, to continue that feeling in which my hope has placed its unchangeable intention, saying with the motto, ‘either here or nowhere.’ The demonstrations of your affection are such, the sweet words of your letter are so cordially expressed, as to lay me under an obligation for ever truly to honour, love, and serve you. I entreat you to please to continue in the same firm and constant purpose, assuring you on my part that I would rather increase it than make it repugnant to the loyalty of a heart which designs to please you. I pray you that if I have in any manner heretofore offended you, you will give me the same absolution which you ask, as henceforward my heart shall be devoted to you alone. I very much desire that my body could be so too. God can do this when He pleases, and once a day I implore Him to do so. Hoping that at length my prayer will be heard ; desiring that time to be brief, thinking it long, adieu till we can meet again. Written with the hand of that secretary who, in heart, body, and will, is your loyal and most assured servant,—H. T. No other heart than A. B. seeks H. T.”

The King, in another missive, advises his beloved to avoid occasions of danger from illness. Few diseases, however, will daunt the heart of an ambitious woman thus sought and sustained by a powerful monarch :—

“My uneasiness for the doubt of your health greatly troubles and distracts me ; I cannot be tranquil without knowing some certainty about it ; but as you have as yet felt nothing from it, I hope and keep myself assured

that it will pass away from you, as I trust it has from us. While we were at Waltham, two ushers, two valets de chambre, and your friar, Master Jerenere, fell sick, but are now quite well. We have since been at Hunsdon, where no disease occurred. I think if you will retire from Surry, as we did, you will escape the danger. Another thing may comfort you—that, indeed, few or no women have had the disease; and none in our court, and few elsewhere, have died of it. Therefore I entreat my entirely beloved to have no alarm, nor let our absence displease you, for wherever I may be I am yours. We must sometimes give way to these events; for to struggle on such a point with fortune, is very often to be more injured by it. Therefore cheer yourself, and take courage, and avoid the evil as much as you can. I hope soon to cause you to sing ‘*le renvoyé*.’ No more, from want of time; but that I wish you were in my arms, to divest you of some of your unreasonable fancies. Written by him who is, and always will be, your immoveable,—H. T.”

The next letter openly refers to the proceedings taken for the divorce from Katherine. It must have warmed Anna’s heart with hope, as it revealed to her aspiring eyes the eminence occupied by a rival about to be removed. How she would have fled, not yielded, if but a brief page of the future could have been perused! How she would have eschewed that dark plot against her royal mistress, of which she was the nucleus and the inspirer! Henry’s reference to the divorce is short and business-like:—“Darling! though I have scarce leisure, yet remembering my promise, I thought it convenient to certify you briefly in what case our affair stands. As touching a lodging for you, we have gotten one by my

Lord Cardinal's means, the like whereof could not have been found hereabout for all causes, as this bearer shall more show you. As touching our other affairs, I assure you there can be no more done, nor more diligence used, nor all manner of dangers better both foreseen and provided for; so that I trust it shall be hereafter to both our comforts the specialities whereof were both too long to be written, and hardly by messenger to be declared. Wherefore, till you repair hither, I keep that thing in store, trusting it shall not be long to, for I have caused my lord, your father, to make his provisions with speed. And thus for sake of time, dear heart! I make an end of my letter. Written with the hand of him which I would were yours.—H. T.”

The following letter—the last worth giving to the reader—refers to an appeal made to the king respecting the “condition” of Mary Boleyn, Anne’s sister, and as will be seen, contains an adjuration to God to aid the writer in his contemplated injustice:—

“The cause of my writing at this time, good sweet heart! is only to understand of your good health and prosperity, whereof to know I would be as glad as in manner mine own, praying God that an it be His pleasure to send us shortly together, for I promise you I long for it. Howbeit, trust it shall not be long to. And seeing my darling is absent, I can do no less than send her some flesh respecting my name, which is ‘hart’s flesh’ for ‘Henry,’ prognosticating that hereafter, God willing, you must enjoy some of mine, which I would be pleased were now. As touching your sister’s matter, I have caused Walter Webye to write to my lord my mind herein, whereby, I trust, we shall not have power to digstave Adam; for surely whatsoever is

said, it cannot so stand with his honour, but that he must needs take her, his natural daughter, now in her extreme necessity. No more to you at this time, my own darling ! but that awhile I would we were together an evening. With the hand of yours,—H. T.”

“They [these letters] are what no Sovereign need either regret or be ashamed of. They are genuine specimens of an honourable affection, expressed in the easy language of true feeling and good sense ; reflecting credit upon his heart as a man, and upon his mind as a king. . . . Few love letters so unexpectedly betrayed to the public eye will bear so close a scrutiny. Their respectful language is an irresistible attestation of Anna’s virtue, and of the impression it had made upon her royal admirer” (vol. x. p. 228). Mr. Turner, of course, must have been well aware that there are two letters of Henry to Anna Boleyn still extant which are so gross and abominable in language that they are quite unfit for publication.

The originals of the above letters are still preserved at the Vatican, having been carried off, it is alleged, by some members of the Papal party. Burnet, when at Rome, hearing of their existence, pronounced them to be forgeries ; but on seeing them he was convinced of their genuineness. He writes, “I was too well acquainted with King Henry’s handwriting to doubt their authenticity.” They are couched in the imperfect French of the period, and without date, but are supposed to have been written about 1527-28. Hall hints that those letters were carried away by Campeggio ; but how could the Cardinal have reached them ? Besides, Henry had his baggage searched at Dover, in pursuit of a secret correspondence with the Pope, but

nothing was found. An apology was offered to Campeggio, to which he replied, "If I were the ambassador of the Emperor Charles, you would not offer me such an insult as you have. What have you found? Nothing." The letters in question were at this time locked in Anna's cabinet, and were evidently purloined by some of her ladies-in-waiting who were in the interest of the Vatican. Sharon Turner says, "Perhaps they have been preserved at the Vatican as an impeachment of the Reformation."

A contemporary chronicler describes Anna Boleyn at this time as "a fair young creature, so exquisitely moulded in form and feature, and gifted with wit so sparkling and pleasant, that she enslaved alike the eyes and understanding of all whom she encountered."

Another chronicler gives account of the "romantic courtship" at Hever Castle, near Edenbridge, Kent, where the hill is yet pointed out whence Henry used to sound his bugle when he came to visit her from his palace at Eltham. Yea, the "exact spot" has been indicated by the finger of tradition, where, at the turn of a walk in the garden, Anna suddenly came upon the King, who "was so struck with her wondrous beauty," that from that moment he was inspired with the fatal passion which raised its unfortunate object to the throne but to translate her to the block. The chronicler talks of the "happy days of courtship." If virtue be necessary to true happiness, the felicity of the ill-matched lovers was aught but genuine. Those who have unreasonably sanctified Anna Boleyn must see the wily maiden in the chase and grounds of Hever listening to the addresses of another woman's husband. The charge of having anticipated the nuptial ceremony by

cohabitation with Henry has been indignantly denied on the part of Anna Boleyn by such grave authorities as Hallam and Turner ; but who can deny the records of the times, the diaries and the statements of those who were in daily intercourse with the King's palace ? Look at the probabilities. Here a young woman, in the flower of youth and fervour of passion, listens to the love story of a married man, who had already seduced her sister, and had been " free " with her mother¹ ; and on his promise to abandon or separate from his wife, and to marry her, she quits her father's home, and consents to live under the same roof, where for three years she is his constant companion at feasts, in his journeys, and at his amusements. Then as regards Henry—a man who never denied himself the gratification of a desire in intrigue or revenge—is it likely that he would abstain for three years from his fascinating guest ? Miss Strickland, reviewing the place Anna held at this period, says, " Scandal, of course, was busy with her name." What lady who submitted to occupy a position so suspicious could escape with her reputation unblemished ? Taking all considerations into account, he would be a remarkably obtuse unbeliever who could discredit the statement of Marco Capello, who wrote on May 13, 1532, " The King loses no opportunity of despatching matters, because, as is reported, Lady Anna is heavy with child." An arrangement, too, made in the preceding September, would go far to prove that a son had been born, for whom Henry provided, by an Act which gave precedence and title to

¹ This woman proves to have been the stepmother of Anna, not the mother, who had died many years previously.—See Thomas's " Norfolk MSS."

the issue of Anna, "legitimate or illegitimate." The latest researches place all doubts on this matter entirely out of court. No act of the English Parliament could, in the "Parliament of Man," make or unmake, for a discerning posterity, the legitimacy or otherwise of young Elizabeth. And even those who still have faith in the spiritual and judicial proceedings of Archbishop Cranmer cannot fail to recognize in his judgment of the case of Anna Boleyn and King Henry a verdict against the legitimacy of the subsequent Queen of England.

THE DIVORCE QUESTION.

LE GRAND has explained the means by which opinions were procured in the University of Paris and other parts of France. Du Moulins states that he had examined the account laid before the French King (Francis), from which it was evident that the votes given in favour of the King of England's divorce, "had been purchased with solid English gold," and that the "real opinion of the University was against the divorce of Katherine" (*Malin. Nat. ad Cornit*, Dec., p. 602). The University of Bologna sent a favourable reply upon the divorce question; but upon investigation, it appears to have been the opinion of three Carmelite friars, drawn up at the suggestion of Pallavicino, a Carmelite agent of Cranmer at Ferrara; the opinion of some theologians was purchased for one hundred gold crowns. Burnet himself admits this fact. The whole question appears to be most complicated, of which state of the case Burnet has taken advantage to indulge in mystification, or deduce erroneous conclusions.

In Germany, the divorce agents were Cranmer, Giovanni de Casale, Andreas, and others of less notable names. "If in Germany," writes Lingard, "subscriptions to the divorce could not be obtained, it was not for the want of agents or of bribes." The opinion of the Cardinal Santa Quati was "respectfully sought." He was offered 2000 gold crowns "in testimonium acceptæ gratitudinis," but he could not be prevailed on to accept of one penny (Strype, i., Append.). Charles V. charged Wolsey with being the originator of the divorce question (Le Grand, iii. 46). Cavendish, on the other hand (428), states that the Cardinal denied the charge in the King's presence, and Reginald Pole affirms that Henry's scruples as to his marriage with Katherine were raised by "certain divines whom Anna Boleyn sent to the King for that purpose." Henry's agents in Rome spared no money or exertions to obtain their object. As to the Pope, they cajoled and flattered him by turns, and, when unsuccessful, they used violent menaces and objurgations; they found their way to his sick bed, and spoke of the "danger to his soul should he die without doing justice to the King of England;" they "accused him of ingratitude to his best friend, and of indifference to the prosperity of the Church." The Pope reiterated his former statements. Still, with the hesitancy and weakness which characterized his conduct throughout these proceedings, he held out hopes of the question being settled to the satisfaction of Henry. Amongst the diplomatists who appeared before Clement on the divorce question, Lord Wiltshire, the father of Anna Boleyn, was the "most insolent, and, considering the position in which he stood, the most indecent and shameless of men."

On one occasion the Pontiff told him that, "as the father of Lady Anne, he should have had the delicacy not to appear there as one of the King's advocates." Sir Gregori Cassalis, another of Henry's commissioners at Rome, alleged that Clement offered to compromise the case "by allowing the King two wives." Lord Herbert contradicts this strange statement, and describes Cassalis as a man of no integrity. It is certain that whilst acting as Henry's agent in Rome, Cassalis was in secret correspondence with Charles V., and also in his pay. The English king, however, was not aware of such facts. Of all the lay or clerical advocates of Henry at Rome, Dr. Cranmer is described as being the most respectful to the Pontiff, whose esteem he won, Clement believing him to be a "prudent politician, as well as a zealous and pious Churchman." Wolsey, writing to Gardiner in Rome, thanks him for the "courage with which he behaved in this great and mighty cause" (Harl. MSS.). The "mysterious and impenetrable Wolsey," as Turner styles him, seems to have approved of the scandalous proceedings of Gardiner, Foxe, Bonner, and other ecclesiastical advocates of Henry in Rome. On one occasion Gardiner became "fierce and personal" in his language to the Pope, who made no reply, but "sighed, sobbed, and cried." The Pontiff, aged and weakened by long-standing ill-health, was not equal to his adversaries. Middle-aged, vigorous, astute, and persevering men, they overpowered him with complicated canon law arguments. He confessed his ignorance of the subject at issue, and gave Gardiner and the other commissioners a "fresh triumph." He made promises of considering "such and such points," but all such perquisitions ended in the renewed con-

viction that he could not legally, as the Pope, comply with Henry's wishes. He desired, personally, it is believed, to decide in favour of the divorce, but his conscience was stronger than his inclination. Finally, he secretly corresponded and sympathized with Katherine, and could see no reason why a solemn decision of his predecessor in her case should be set aside.

During the litigation of the divorce question (April, 1532), an unreflecting member of the Commons, named Henry Temse, gave notice that he would propose a motion to the House, to the effect that his Highness the King should take back to wife the goodly Queen Katherine, and thereby stop all further proceedings of the scandalous divorce question. This motion aroused the passion of the King, but upon the advice of his ministers he dissembled. He sent for Sir Thomas Audley, the Speaker of the Commons, and with the dissimulation which characterized his conduct at this period, when he considered deceit his best weapon, he attempted to explain to him the scruples with which his conscience had so long been agitated—scruples, he alleged, which had proceeded from no wanton appetite, which had arisen after the fervour of youth was past—and which scruples were confirmed by the concurring sentiments of all the learned Universities in Europe. "Excepting in Spain and Portugal, it was never heard of, that any man had espoused two sisters; but he himself had the misfortune he believed to be the first Christian man who had ever married his brother's widow" (Lord Herbert, *Hall*, fol. 205). The King soon showed, when he had once passed the threshold of faithfulness to his first vows, how very little scruple or conscience had to do with his actions. On other occasions, too, the King made statements to his confessor

(Longland, Bishop of Lincoln), that "his conscience was troubled, and he was much grieved by his marriage with his brother's widow." The confessor was the creature of Wolsey, and for a time aided and abetted the scheme to promote the divorce. Longland, however, subsequently assured Sir Thomas More that he had never encouraged or suggested the King's scruples, and he deeply regretted the part he took against the Queen.

In November, 1528, Henry "submitted his case" to a council of judges and nobles. Hall², who was present, says his Highness addressed his most worthy councillors in these words of royal wisdom: "If it be adjudged that the Queen is my lawful wife, nothing will be more pleasant or more acceptable to me, both for the clearing of my conscience, and also for the good qualities and conditions I know to be in her; for I assure you all, that besides her noble parentage, she is a woman of most gentleness and humility, and buxomness too; yea, of all good qualities appertaining to nobility she is without comparison. So that if I were to marry again I would choose her above all other women; but if it is determined in judgment that our marriage is against God's law, then shall I sorrow for parting from so good a lady and so loving a companion. These be the sores that vex my mind, these be the pangs that trouble my conscience, for the declaration of which I have assembled you together; and now, my lords, you may depart."

In the reign of Edward VI., Phillips, Dean of Rochester, had in his possession a MS. volume presented to him by Bishop Fisher a few months before

² Edward Hall was a judge of the Sheriff's Court. His quaint chronicle presents an interesting account of the dress, manners, customs, and social mode of life in those days. He did not long survive the "wise King," as he styled Henry, having died in 1547.

his arrest, containing a minute secret history of the rise and progress of the divorce question between Henry and Katherine of Arragon. This MS. would doubtless have been of much importance to the future historian ; but Phillips, fearing the approach of Somerset's Commissioners to search for prohibited books, committed it to the flames.

In Anna Boleyn's dealings with Cardinal Wolsey, she evinced the most marked duplicity. It is alleged that she never forgave him for having "crossed her first love" for Lord Percy. On the other hand, we have a record of the fact that, "at the King's command, Wolsey had dissolved the pre-contract between Lord Percy and Anna." If so, it is probable it was done with her own consent, and, consequently, she could feel no resentment against the Cardinal on that account. We see that during the divorce controversy she "humbly thanks him for the trouble he took in seeking to bring to pass the greatest weal that is possible to come to any creature living, and in especial reminding how wretched and unworthy she is in comparison to his Highness." . . . "I assure you, my Lord Cardinal, after this matter is brought to bear, you shall find me as your *bound* (in the meantime) to owe you my service, and then look what thing in this world I can manage to do your pleasure in, you shall find me the gladdest woman in the world to do it³." At the moment Anna wrote this letter, she was conspiring for the destruction of the Cardinal, who, in turn, practised deception with her, as may be gathered from his subsequent movements, and the bitterness with which he gave expression to the following sentence : "Nan Bolen shall not be our Queen !"

³ The original of this letter is in the British Museum.

The Cardinal found too late that, in encouraging Anna, he involuntarily made a Queen, where he had only intended a mistress. For, Churchman though he was, and bound to be moral, he had bargained with himself that Henry would have been satisfied with the illegitimate gratification of his passion ; and hoped that if Anna had a child born to her in good time, the King would have found it impossible, in face of the nation, to make her his wife. But the Cardinal's deceitful encouragement of Anna defeated all his schemes for throwing into oblivion the pursuit of the divorce ; for Circe redoubled her arts, and enmeshed the amorous monarch so inextricably in her wiles, that, at her instance, his ardour for the divorce was intensified, and the downfall of Wolsey was determined. This view is sustained by many authorities ; and the noble author of the "English Chancellors" observes, that at this time the Cardinal had no idea that Henry intended to make Anna his Queen, and speculated upon the chances that she might only be added to the list of his mistresses, "in which the name of her sister Mary once stood."

Lord Campbell's legal opinion was, "That according to the then existing canon law of Christendom—a law which was undisputed—the Pope could not legitimately pronounce a divorce in the case of Katherine of Arragon." Many of the most eminent lawyers and theologians at home and abroad held a similar view of the subject ; and some German theologians of high repute declared that even if the marriage of Katherine and Arthur had been consummated, they were inclined to hold the nuptials with Henry to be valid. But the consummation of the first marriage was not proved, and Katherine made the most solemn declaration to that effect, to which Henry made

no counter statement. Hume contends that, "even judging of the divorce question by Scripture—to which the appeal was every moment made—the arguments for the King's cause appear but lame and imperfect" (vol. iii. p. 167). Mr. Froude, as a matter of course, defends Cranmer's decree, by stating that "he had at least as much power to grant a divorce as the Pope himself." If all Christendom did not entertain a different opinion from the recent one of Mr. Froude, Henry would hardly have appealed to the Vatican.

Many curious incidents occurred during the divorce proceedings illustrative of the characters of the various actors. Henry himself questioned Anna as to the pre-contract between her and Lord Percy: "Is it so, Nan?" said he; "what sayest thou to it?" "To what?" replied Anna Boleyn. "Mother of God, they say thou hast promised to marry young Percy!" Although Henry frowned and looked excited, Anna, who had always a ready answer, had now to summon all the witching charms of her manner to explain the history of her first love. "May it please your Highness, I knew no other-wise but that it was lawful for me to make such promises. I must confess I made him (Percy) some such promises; but no good subject makes any promise but with the proviso that if his Sovereign commands other-wise, it shall be lawful for him to obey." In a moment Henry's frowns were changed to smiles, and in rapturous joy he exclaimed, "Well said, mine own darling girl." Having "caressed her" for some time, he took his departure, bidding a short adieu to his "charming Nan," who thus briefly and heartlessly laid down the gallant young Percy's hopes and her own affections on the altar of a fatal ambition.

ARRIVAL OF CAMPEGGIO.—PUBLIC PROCESSION.

THE advent of Campeggio was the occasion of the last national reception given to a Pope's Legate in England; for although Pole was royally received by Philip and Mary, he found a divided nation, and the glories of his outward reception were confined to the passage up the river. The progress of Campeggio was a continued ovation from his first step on English ground.

On the 23rd of July, 1528, Cardinal Campeggio, as the Papal Legate, landed at Deal, where he was received by Richard Foxe, Bishop of Winchester, Lord Cobham, and "other nobles, knights, and esquires," who escorted him to Sandwich. On the following day he made his public entry into Canterbury, where the corporation, clergy, the Archbishop of the diocese (Wareham), the Bishop of Rochester (Fisher), and three Lord Abbots, in full pontificals, received him at the gates of the Cathedral. The people expressed great reverence for the Legate, especially the women, who brought forth their children along the route from Deal to London to receive the "apostolic benediction." Stopping two days in Canterbury, he proceeded on his road to Rochester, accompanied with a guard of honour numbering 500 horsemen. In Rochester he was entertained at a banquet given by Bishop Fisher. From that town he was attended by the Archbishop of Canterbury, at the head of one thousand horsemen in armour, and wearing gold chains. On the fourth day of the procession the Cardinal reached Blackheath, where he was received by the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Surrey, Lord Darcy, and the Bishops of

Durham and Ely. A number of knights and esquires, "mounted on prancing steeds," appeared in the procession. Twelve trumpeters on horseback, dressed in buff jackets and velvet caps, rode before the Bishop of Rochester and his clergy. At Blackheath the Bishop of Rochester's steward marshalled some two hundred children, from five to ten years of age, who strewed flowers beneath the Legate's feet, and sang some verses of welcome composed by the Abbess of Godstow. A vast crowd of women and young maidens attended at this point of the procession, and "raised a goodly shout" for Queen Katherine, and again exclaimed with great vehemence, "No Nan Boleyn for us!" The Earl of Surrey waved his hand in disapproval of these manifestations, which were met with renewed cries of "No harlot for a queen! No harlot for a queen!" At this particular juncture the women of the middle and lower classes took a lively interest in Queen Katherine's cause. They spoke with contempt and scorn of the grand-daughter of a London Alderman aspiring to the position of a queen. "She was no better than themselves; and they would not respect her as a queen." "They found no fault with the real Queen, and she should not be set aside for bold-faced Nan⁴." At a later period the people of Yorkshire were fierce in their denunciations of Anna Boleyn. Here is a specimen:—"Who the devil is Nan Boleyn? Down with her!" "We will have no harlot for a queen!" "Let Nan go to Woodstock, where old Hal can visit her if he likes." Yet, despite all these evidences of popular hostility,

⁴ The term "Bold-faced" could, with far greater justice, be applied to Mary Boleyn. So much for popular prejudice—in this instance, at least.

Mr. Froude contends that the "nation was thoroughly united on the divorce question." But there is no reliable record of such extant. A writer of the last century alleges that "the people wished well to Anna Boleyn, because they knew she was a Lutheran in her heart." Now, the fact is, that the people knew nothing of Luther's principles; whilst the future promoters of the Reformation, although openly opposed to the Pope's spiritual supremacy in the kingdom, were at that time advocates of the doctrine of the Real Presence—that stand-point of the Roman Catholic creed. As to Anna Boleyn, she never was any thing but a Roman Catholic in creed: she never inwardly wavered in her belief in that religion. All the circumstances of her death prove her convictions in this regard; yet, swayed by a fatal ambition, she made use of all parties to compass her designs.

To return to Campeggio. In a large meadow, "two miles from London, a tent of cloth of gold had been erected for a kingly reception, and the presentation of notable persons to his Eminence." After an hour's delay the procession was reformed for London, where excitement, enthusiasm, and curiosity had now become as boundless as they might have been in the days of Edward the Fourth. The nobility rode in advance, "well mounted, and wearing elegant attire;" then passed Cardinal Campeggio, in magnificent robes "glittering with jewels and precious stones;" his cross-bearers, pillars, pole-axes; his servants in red liveries; his secretaries, physicians, and general suite. Next came 200 horse, and a "vast concourse of people." The procession is said to have become "two miles long before it reached the city gates." From St. George's Church to London Bridge the road was lined

on both sides by monks and clergy, dressed in their various quaint habits, with copes of cloth of gold, gold and silver crosses, banners, &c. As the Legate passed "they threw up clouds of incense, and sang hymns." At the foot of London Bridge two Bishops received the Cardinal, the people shouted with joy, whilst the roar of artillery from the Tower and the river forts rent the air, to use Wolsey's own words, "as if the very heavens would fall." Hundreds of church and abbey bells poured forth their clangour, with the "deeper bass" of old St. Paul's. In Gracechurch-street the London City Companies joined the procession; at Cheapside the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London offered their congratulations to the illustrious visitor. Next arrived Sir Thomas More, who delivered a Latin oration of great eloquence. When the procession reached St. Paul's another grand spectacle was presented. The Bishops of London and Lincoln, surrounded by two hundred ecclesiastics, conducted the Legate to the high altar. Incense, music, the ringing of silver bells inside the churches—outside the thunder of artillery, and the prolonged shouts of the multitude—closed the proceedings of a memorable day.

Dr. Brewer, the learned calendarer of the State Papers of that period, states that the reception given to Cardinal Campeggio was magnificent beyond description: there had been nothing like it seen in England, at least within the memory of any one then living. It had been arranged and prepared, and the whole expense defrayed, by Wolsey. But there was one presence wanting to complete the splendour of the ceremony—that was his own. Archbishops, bishops, abbots, dukes, earls, and all the notable men of the state were there, but Car-

dinal Wolsey and the King were absent. A fear of the sweating sickness was, however, alleged as the cause. Five days later another grand ceremony took place on the presentation of the Legate to the King. All parties seemed pleased, the King and his advisers expressing their willingness to abide by the decision of the Court of Rome. Wolsey was then at the pinnacle of his power: the King esteemed him as the "greatest minister that England had ever seen;" all promised fair; but there were some who could—reading the mutations in the King's temper—"pierce the dark cloud which was gathering in the distance." In fact, the Cardinal of York was standing on a mine whose explosive elements were the fierce desires and the prodigality of the King.

THE TRIAL OF KATHERINE.

THE divorce question, which had been agitated in almost every city and university of Europe, was ordered by the Pontiff for adjudication in London. Cardinal Campeggio, as we have seen, was chosen by the Pope to represent him at the trial. The task was difficult. The King, Wolsey, Gardiner, and Bonner were on the one side; on the other, the friendless Queen. The Pontiff it is alleged, was under coercion by the Emperor—perhaps more for political reasons than for the esteem and love in which he held his aunt.

Clement had no cause to esteem the Emperor Charles, who had made him a prisoner, and permitted the city of Rome to be sacked and desecrated. Charles was also disliked by the College of Cardinals on account of his treatment of the Pope; yet the Pontiff was not free

from censure himself. The Emperor's reverence for religion was at times so interwoven with political considerations, that it was impossible to give him credit for sincerity. Charles has been plenteously eulogized by Catholics, and as profusely abused by Protestant writers; consequently much misrepresented by both. To a certain period Henry was far more earnest and friendly to the Papacy than Charles, who selfishly speculated on the weakness of the Pontiff. Clement at times became energetic and resolute, then timid and vacillating; to-day feeling his responsibilities to Heaven as a priest, to-morrow ready to enter the Council Chamber to participate in questions of statecraft with the wordliness of a secular monarch. It seems evident he was no match for either Charles or Henry, with their polished instruments of diplomacy. Fearing to offend either imperious potentate, he, on one occasion, with tears in eyes, exclaimed, "Alas! alas! I am now placed between the big hammer and the forge fire." An unpleasant situation for one who "loved to wander alone amidst his books and flower-gardens."

Silja de Todi and Fusconi, who wrote from a long personal knowledge of Clement, represent him in a very different light from that in which he is shown in the pages of Burnet, Ranke, and Froude. Cellini describes him as a man of "warm temper, yet quiet, benevolent, virtuous—a learned scholar, possessed of elegant taste, wit, and humour; sometimes sad, sometimes pleasant."

Mr. Froude, in vol. ii. p. 234, gives the following description of Pope Clement:—"He wore his falsehood with so easy a grace that it assumed the character of truth. He was false, deceitful, treacherous; yet he had the virtue of not pretending to be virtuous. He was a

real man, though but an indifferent one; and we can refuse to no one, however grave his faults, a certain ambiguous sympathy, when in his perplexity he shows us features so truly human in their weakness as those of Clement VII." In recurring to vol. i. p. 238, Mr. Froude favours us with another picture of the same Pope, traced in opposite colours:—"He was an indifferent master of that dissimulation to which he was reduced, and his weakness entitles him to pity, if not to respect."

If the incongruity of these sketches do not neutralize the value of both, in the absence of the writer's indication as to which we are to believe, the plain duty of the historical student is to consult less dogmatic and more consistent authorities. In truth, Clement was a good, well-intentioned man, and an irreproachable priest; but as a temporal ruler, he did not rank as a Cæsar amongst the Pontiffs.

Queen Katherine was almost without a friend at this juncture, save the noisy sympathies of the populace, which made little impression upon the King or his advisers. Campeggio's secret instructions were to protract the inquiry, and many unlooked-for circumstances promoted his views in this respect. The sweating sickness, for instance, broke out, spreading in all circles; Anna Boleyn and her brother, and many of the King's Court, were seized with the disease. Anna and her brother were "shrifted, and received." The King, who had a great horror of death, threw aside the divorce question for many weeks, and locked himself up from all communication with courtiers or domestics; he actually joined Queen Katherine in prayer; went to confession daily, and received Communion every Sun-

day; sent "kindly messages to Wolsey," and sought the "forgiveness of some persons whom he had injured." How many did he not injure? Anna Boleyn was sent home to her father; the King "ate and drank at the same table with the Queen, spoke of her excellence as a wife, and his own unworthiness." A pregnant consideration presents itself here. We see the change wrought in Henry by the apprehension of death. If he really believed his union with Queen Katherine to be sinful, as alleged in his argument for divorce, would he have returned to cohabitation when in fear of proximate death? If the Church believed his marriage wrong, Henry would have been refused the sacraments whilst living with the Queen. The courtiers and people were astonished, we are informed, at the apparent miracle which had been wrought in the King. But when the sweating sickness had subsided, Henry was himself again. The Queen was ordered to retire to her former residence, and Anna Boleyn recalled, when she carefully employed all her fascinations to regain her former ascendancy. In this course her hopes were soon realized, for the King's passion seemed to have increased tenfold. Lingard says that the caution of Campeggio proved him to be a match for all the arts of Wolsey and his royal master. In the Legate's private interview with Katherine, he advised her to enter a convent. She replied with firmness that she was astonished at such a proposal being addressed to her, and she adhered to her conviction that she had been for eighteen years a lawful and a faithful wife. He visited her again, accompanied by Wolsey and three prelates, but the "Queen was still obstinate." Every day the web became more entangled; evidence, documents,

and theological opinions were multiplied, but little faith could be placed in any of them. Seven months were occupied with these discreditable proceedings, and the matter seemed as far as ever from being adjusted. The “long-expected” trial at last took place in the Parliament Chamber, at Blackfriars⁵. The King’s advocates said they were prepared to prove three distinct matters which would annul Katherine’s marriage : “1. That the marriage between Arthur and Katherine had been consummated, whence they inferred that her subsequent marriage with Henry was contrary to the law of God. 2. That supposing that the case admitted of a dispensation, yet the bull of Julius the Second had been obtained under false pretences. 3. That the brief of dispensation produced by the Queen, which remedied the defects of the bull, was an evident forgery.” The character of the witnesses appealed to, and the mode of procuring the evidence—mysterious and unconnected as it was—would have been rejected at once by a commonplace jury of the present day. The King and Queen appeared in court, the latter protesting against the form of the trial, and those who were to be her judges. Henry sat in state at the right hand of Cardinals Wolsey and Campeggio ; the Queen on their left. Gardiner, who had been recalled from Rome, acted as the chief counsel for the King. The Queen having been called in court, rose and renewed her protest on these grounds :—First, because she was a stranger ; secondly, that the judges in this case held benefices in the realm of England, the gift of her husband ; and thirdly, that she had good reason to believe that justice could not be obtained in a court

⁵ June 18, 1529.

constituted like that before her. Her appeal was rejected. After a few minutes the Queen again rose—all eyes were now fixed upon the injured wife—she advanced towards the King's chair, and throwing herself upon her knees, addressed him in the most pathetic language: "Sire," said she, "I beseech you to pity me, a woman and a stranger without one assured friend; without even an indifferent counsellor. I take God to witness that I have always been to you a true and a loyal wife; that I have made it my constant duty to seek your pleasure; that I have loved all whom you loved, whether I had reason or not, whether they were friends or foes to me. I have been your wife for many years. I have brought you many children, and God knows that when I came to your bed I was a virgin, and I put it to your own conscience to say whether it was not so. If there be any offence which can be alleged against me, I consent to depart with infamy; if not, then I pray you to do me justice."

The Queen then retired amidst subdued applause. Her speech had made an impression, and Henry could perceive what effect it might have on the future stages of the trial. He briefly addressed the court. "The Queen," he said, "had always been a dutiful and a good wife; that his present suit did not proceed from any dislike of her, but from the tenderness of his own conscience; that his scruples had not been suggested, but, on the contrary, discouraged by the Cardinal of York; that they were confirmed by the Bishop of Tarbes; that he had consulted his confessors and several other bishops, who advised him to apply to the Pontiff; and that in consequence the present court had been appointed, in the decision of which, be it what

it might, he should cheerfully acquiesce" (Cavendish, p. 428). Burnet alleges that the King was not present on this occasion; yet in another part of his work he gives a letter of Henry's to his agents in Rome, where the following passage occurs: "On that day *we* and the Queen appeared in person at the court" (Burnet's Records, p. 78). Cavendish, from whom the report of the proceedings is chronicled, was in court during the trial.

The Queen, protesting against further proceedings, would not appear in court, "nor by attorney," and was pronounced contumacious. Several sittings were held, but the action was all "on one side." The question to be decided, as alleged, was one affecting the King's conscience; but his advocates, although men of considerable ability, failed to establish his case. The trial was further protracted, amidst the "general disgust and indignation of the public;" and proclamations were issued "warning the people not to dare wag their tongues in ugly talk against the King's highness." On the 23rd of July the King's counsel demanded judgment immediately, but Cardinal Campeggio would not be dictated to by the Court party. He informed the Crown lawyers, almost in Henry's presence, that "the judgment must be deferred until the whole of the proceedings had been laid before the Pontiff; that he had come there to do justice, and no consideration should divert him from his duty. He was too old, and weak, and sickly, to seek the favour or fear the resentment of any man living. The defendant had challenged him and his colleague as judges, because they were the subjects of her opponent"⁶.

⁶ Campeggio held the Bishopric of Salisbury, the duties having been performed by the Dean and Chapter: otherwise he was not an Eng-

To avoid any error, they had therefore determined to consult the Apostolic See, and for that purpose did then adjourn the court until October."

The Duke of Suffolk, evidently at the suggestion of the King, striking the table, exclaimed in a vehement tone, that the old saw was now verified: "Never did Cardinal bring good to England." Campeggio looked with withering scorn at Suffolk; and in a few minutes Wolsey rose, and a breathless silence ensued. All eyes were now turned on the Cardinal of York, when, in a deep and solemn voice, he addressed Suffolk: "My Lord," said he, "of all men living you have least reason to dispraise Cardinals; for if I, a poor Cardinal, had not been, you would not at this present moment have had a head upon your shoulders wherewith to make such a brag in disrepute of us who have meant you no harm, and have given you no cause of offence. If you, my Lord of Suffolk, were the King's ambassador in foreign parts, would you venture to decide on important matters without first consulting your Sovereign? We are also commissioners, and cannot proceed to judgment without the knowledge of him from whom our authority proceeds. Therefore, do we neither more nor less than our commission alloweth; and if any man will be offended with us, he is an unwise man. Pacify yourself then, my Lord of Suffolk, and speak not reproachfully of your

lish subject. There could have been no mistake as to the motives which induced Henry to appoint Campeggio to the See of Salisbury, but the Legate's consent proved to be above purchase. There were, however, several other Sees conferred on foreigners who seldom if ever came to England—a circumstance which can well account for the lack of religion in many districts. Campeggio was subsequently deprived of the See of Salisbury by the King; as also Cardinal Ghinucci of that of Worcester.

best friend. You know what friendship I have shown you ; but this is the first time I ever revealed it, either to my own praise or your dishonour."

Wolsey had formerly appeased the angry feeling of the King against Suffolk, and rendered him several other services ; and also released him from pecuniary embarrassments. The Cardinal was not the only man to whom the Duke of Suffolk proved ungrateful.

Burnet represents Campeggio as an "immoral man, even in old age, bringing his bastard son with him to the English court." It did not suit Burnet's policy to make any particular inquiry as to Campeggio's public or private life. Campeggio was an Italian gentleman of ancient family. He had been married early in life ; and on the death of his wife, in 1509, he resolved to take holy orders. In private life he was known as a virtuous, good man, a distinguished scholar, a theologian and a statesman. He not alone attracted the attention of the Pontiff, but of several neighbouring sovereigns. He discharged some important diplomatic missions to the entire satisfaction of a discriminating master, Leo the Tenth. He also enjoyed the apparent friendship of Henry the Eighth and Wolsey. In 1517 he was created a Cardinal, and then entered zealously into the service of the Papacy. On his arrival in England, he was accompanied by his second son, Rodolfo, on whom Henry conferred the honour of knighthood. Rodolfo was a poet and a musician, and, consequently, an acceptable guest to King Henry. So much for Burnet's relation of the "Cardinal and his bastard".

Lorenzo Campeggio was a man of considerable

⁷ In the "Monastic Houses, their Accusers and Defenders," the reader will find an analysis of Burnet's merits as an historian.

learning, a master of civil and canon law; one of the most accomplished courtiers of his time, when diplomacy was so much entrusted to ecclesiastics. He first visited England as a legate in 1519, when he received that cordial reception which Henry always awarded to men of learning. He was specially sent to Germany by the Court of Rome, to inquire into the progress of the Reformation; and his report on that subject was perhaps one of the ablest presented to the Pontiff on the question. He died in 1539, regretted by the chief schools of learning on the Continent and in England.

The most remarkable persons in promoting the divorce of Katherine of Arragon were men who subsequently distinguished themselves as the adherents of the Reformation on one side, and of Catholicity on the other. Both parties were enemies to the deeply injured Queen; and few, if any, of them in after life seemed to have had any remorse of conscience for their hostility. Some of the German reformers, whose disinterestedness afforded room for impartial judgment, not only disapproved of Katherine's divorce, but sympathized with her: the English reformers spoke and acted otherwise, because their interest intervened. Historians and "essayists," from John Speed and Gilbert Burnet down to the authors of the romances of history recently published, have attributed unworthy motives to Clement VII. and the Court of Cardinals for deciding in favour of Katherine. The only accusation against Clement which has shown a capability of proof is the desire he manifested for delay, doubtless hoping that Henry's illicit passion for Anna Boleyn might cool, and that at least the sanction of the Church should not be sought for a great wrong, or an apparent condonation of un-

repented crime. Clement never showed any hesitation on the great principle of Katherine's rights ; and surely his censors will acknowledge that he was confirmed in his determination as to the ultimate finding by the conviction that if he granted a divorce in this case he would be in some measure sanctioning the facile dispensation of Martin Luther, who had just substantially permitted polygamy.

THE "REGULAR CLERGY" AND THE PEOPLE.

THE historians of the Reformation epoch conceal or misrepresent the fact that the friars were very popular with the inhabitants of the large towns, as well as with those of the rural districts ; that "they fiercely fought for the local privileges of the people ;" whilst the secular clergy, with few exceptions, "sided with the nobles and esquires." In 1512, when King Henry caused an Act to be passed "depriving murderers and other malefactors of the benefit of clergy," the religious orders immediately protested against it ; they went forth on the highways, and spoke "in the name of the Church of Christ, which extended the largest amount of mercy to the dying sinner. They would not, they said, obey such a law : it was against the charity and mercy of heaven." In 1515 Richard Kidderminster, the Lord Abbot of Winchcomb, preached a sermon at Paul's Cross, to a vast multitude of people, "wherein he declared that this statute was contrary to the law of God and the liberties of the Church." This "goodly discourse made a large impression upon the people ;" and the King immediately put forth another friar, named Standish, to

reply. The scene which followed between the "seculars, the regulars, and the courtiers," was not very conducive to religion. Standish maintained that the "Act was not passed to diminish the liberties of the Church, but to protect the public weal." The temporal lords became warm on the subject—for indeed there were few amongst them who were competent to argue the question—and they called on the bishops to compel the Lord Abbot to make an "humble and penitential apology for his bad discourse." The prelates not only refused to comply with this request, but cited Dr. Standish before Convocation, to "answer certain articles involving the points in dispute." Standish then appealed to the King for protection. The two parties were soon brought into collision. The regular clergy urged his Highness to maintain the rights of the Church: the temporal lords reminded him of his coronation oath; and they made themselves the champions of the unscrupulous Standish, who was certainly a man of considerable ability. The question was next referred to the judges, who condemned both the friars and Convocation for the part they had taken. They, however, gratified the King's vanity by extending his prerogative to whatever might please him or suit his policy. The ability and zeal with which this and many former angry discussions were conducted are a proof—if one were necessary—that the friars were neither "ignorant nor apathetic," as that learned "little busybody," Erasmus, has so often stated.

THE "SWEATING SICKNESS."

BEYOND the medical faculty perhaps few know any particulars of the destructive sickness which caused so extensive a loss of life in England, and excited such consternation in King Henry as, for a time, served almost to reconvert him to virtue. For two centuries no infection had visited England which, in fearful rapidity and malignity, could be compared to the *Sudor Anglicus*, as it was at first called, from the notion that its attacks were solely confined to Englishmen. People sitting at dinner in the full enjoyment of health and spirits were seized with it and died before the next morning. An open window, accidental contact in the streets, children playing before the door, a beggar knocking at the rich man's gate, appeared capable of disseminating the infection, and a whole family would be devastated in a few hours without hope or remedy. When the sickness once appeared precaution was unavailing, and flight afforded the only chance of security. The violence of the disease sometimes abated at the approach of the cold weather. In 1518 the sweating sickness was accompanied by the measles and small-pox; and it is described by one of the King's physicians as "sweeping through the realm, leaving desolation at every second door." The disease commenced with fever, followed by internal struggles of nature, causing sweat. If the constitution proved sufficiently strong to expel the poison, the patient escaped. It was attended with sharp pains in the back, shoulders, and extremities, and then attacked the liver. Pains in the head were succeeded by oppressions of the heart, followed by

drowsiness, the "whole body becoming inactive and lumpish." It had the further peculiarities, that men of middle age and sanguine complexion were most liable to its ravages. "Labouring and thin-dieted" men generally escaped it. Dr. Carus states that the disease was almost peculiar to Englishmen, "following them, as the shadow does the body, in all countries, albeit not at all times. Others it haunted not at all, or else very seldom." Strange to say, it never entered Scotland, perhaps in consequence of the rigid and scanty fare of the people. In Calais, Antwerp, and Brabant it generally singled out English residents or visitors, whilst the native population were unaffected. But, nevertheless, many foreigners died of it also—for instance, that accomplished Latin scholar Ammonius expired after a few hours' illness, to the great grief of his English friends. Giustiniani, the Venetian ambassador, was attacked twice in one week, and recovered; whilst two of his secretaries died of it. "Foreign ambassadors," observes Dr. Brewer, "feared to set foot in England, or were urgent to get away. And although Wolsey had been attacked four times by this epidemic, he was the only man who remained at his post during the general consternation." "Once sickened," people yielded to despair: "seeing how furiously it handled them and unmercifully choked them, they gave up all hope."

"The noble in birth, goodly condition, grave sobriety, singular and much learning," were amongst the first victims of this scourge. Erasmus attributed the sickness to ill-constructed houses, bad ventilation, and to the clay floors, unchanged and festering rushes with which the rooms were strewn, and the putrid offal,

bones, &c., which rotted together in the unswept and unwashed dining-halls. He “urged moderation at meals, less use of salt food, clean streets, and improved shoreage⁸.” The “meagre suffered less than the gross in person :” the poor agricultural labourer escaped, while the wealthy noble and citizen perished in a few hours. Change of residence, fresh air, and moderate diet, seem to have been the only sure specifics against this dreadful malady⁹.

In the reign of Edward VI. the sweating sickness visited London in a more fatal form. It is described in the young King’s journal as “more vehement than the old sweat ; for if one took cold he died within three hours ; and if he escaped cold the sickness lasted but nine hours at the most ; and those that died were raving mad.” The deaths averaged from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty daily in London alone.

WOLSEY AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES.

THE conspiracy against the Cardinal of York was now approaching its first phase. Those who wished for a

⁸ Letter of Erasmus to John Francis, Wolsey’s physician ; also in Brewer’s State Papers, vol. ii., are to be found an interesting paper of Dr. Caius on the rise and progress of the sweating disease.

⁹ A manuscript which is preserved in the British Museum, shows that Henry spent some of his leisure hours in preparing “Plaisters and ointments for ulcerated legs ;” “to heal swellings in the ankles ;” “an ointment devised by his Highness to cool and let down inflammations ;” and “one to take away the itch.” Here is another curious prescription : “A plaister from my Lady Anne of Cleves, to mollify and resolve, comfort and take away, the pain of cold and windy causes.”

redistribution of property were aware of his high conservative tendencies in Church and State. The Suffolks, the Norfolks, the Pagets, the Clintons, the Seymours, the Russells, the Herberts, the Ratcliffs, the Hobys, the Manners, the Dudleys, the Grays, the Wyatts, the Kingstons, the Dennys, and the crowd of spendthrift and unprincipled squires who were ready to join in any movement to obtain a confiscation of the monastic property, beheld the great barrier to their proceedings in the person of Thomas Wolsey. The combination above mentioned was composed of strange material, for they personally hated one another; jealous prelates and abbots, disappointed placemen, ignorant nobles, treacherous courtiers, and unfrocked priests, were perhaps the most persistent in bringing about the fall of the minister. They were jealous of his genius and the results of his brilliant statesmanship; they envied him the greatness to which he had been elevated in the estimation of princes and diplomatists; yet not one amongst them possessed his administrative talent. The Boleyns performed a subordinate part at this time; but were energetic in fabricating stories of the Cardinal and conveying them to the King, who still hesitated, expressing his renewed confidence in his old favourite. Legrand, who has closely investigated the plots against Wolsey, considers Queen Anna to have been "the instigator of all." This statement is corroborated by others who were "eye-witnesses." The general topic of conversation "amongst the nobles and the squires was the confiscation of Church property; and many creditors' claims were postponed until the much-desired object was achieved." "It was feared that the King would never consent to such measures whilst Wolsey was his Councillor;" and in this opinion

they were partly correct. "These noble lords imagine," observes Legrand, "that the Lord Cardinal of York once dead, or ruined, they will incontinently plunder the Church and strip it of its property." Yet those enemies of Wolsey were opposed to the Reformation, and cast ridicule upon its German founders; they still adhered to the olden religion, and their hostility to the Pope was more of a political character, or to please the King, whom the Pontiff "disobliged." They quarrelled and abused monks and seculars "as they did before;" nevertheless, they responded to the vesper bell, they heard the Latin mass as their fathers had of yore; they raised no question against the dogmas of the Church, they dined at the abbeys, and "made merrie at the bishop's hospitable hall;" but, at the same time, they hungered for the well-cultivated manors, the inviting gardens, the orchards, the shady groves, the murmuring streams, the cattle, the gold and silver of the abbeys and convents; and they were determined to possess them by any means, even misrepresentation, perjury, fraud, or violence. Their religious sentiments were, as already stated, unchanged, and no casuistry can set aside that fact; but an absorbing desire of possessing their neighbours' goods led to the revolution in property, which ultimately resulted in the Reformation movement, as the surest mode of retaining the property which had just been attained. The Rev. Mr. Blunt, in his recent work upon the Reformation, puts the question as to the "motives" of the Reformers with direct and simple force: "Few," writes he, "cared for Reformation—many cared for destruction." This is the result of the long researches of a learned and truthful Protestant divine: he has furnished the world with the

“motives” of those who imposed the “new learning” on England.

Such was the posture of affairs in 1529, when the enemies of Wolsey made a successful blow at the power of the “greatest minister that England had ever seen.”

We must recur to the period when Wolsey was invested with the purple as Cardinal. Leo X. did not wish to elevate the English prelate to the dignity, as Polydore Vergil and Hadrian, both Imperialists, influenced the Pontiff for a time against Wolsey. There is still preserved in the Vatican a letter from King Henry, seeking the “red hat” for his minister. In this letter to Leo, he begs of him to pay the same attention to whatever Wolsey says as if it proceeded from his own lips; he expresses his “extreme anxiety” and fervent desire for the day when he shall see Thomas Wolsey advanced to the Cardinalate—a “dignity he fully deserved, for his genius, learning, and many admirable qualities.” The courteous Leo hesitated to offend either Maximilian or the French monarch, who required similar honours for their own favourites; but the Pontiff at length felt that he could no longer refuse the request of so “faithful a son of the Church” as Henry was then acknowledged to be. When the English King received intelligence of Wolsey’s promotion to be a prince of the Church, he “became delighted,” and, writing to the Pope, he stated, “Nothing in all my life has given me greater pleasure than the brief announcing Thomas Wolsey’s elevation to the College of Cardinals.” He added, that he “regarded the distinction thus conferred on a subject for whom he entertained the strongest affection, as a favour conferred upon himself.” It is generally supposed, and has often been asserted by

historians, that Wolsey had been long "bribing and intriguing," in order to pave the way to the rank to which he aspired; but a diligent search of the State Papers bearing on the case prove that he did not seek the honour so coveted for others, and that it was mainly at the request of Henry, although the Pontiff was aware of Wolsey's claims to the distinction. The installation took place at Westminster Abbey, with all the magnificence of the Roman ritual. "Peers and commoners flocked thither to pay him homage;" "abbots, bishops, monks, friars, and seculars were present on the occasion; and the proceedings of the day concluded with a sumptuous banquet at the newly-made Cardinal's Palace, at which King Henry and Queen Catherine were present, surrounded by the flower of the English nobility." There were, the chronicles say, abbots, bishops, knights, esquires, and titled dames, "all seated at the festive board." Nor were the crowd without forgotten; they were also regaled with a profuseness so pleasing to the multitude. "Modern philosophy," observes Dr. Brewer, "despises Lord Mayors' gilt coaches and Cardinals' hats, but the philosophy of that age was different. Men delighted in such shows, without stopping to reason about them. Even men who cannot eschew honours, and do not care for them, may in time not only accept but esteem them." Indeed, kings borrow honour from the repute of their trusted servants; and at this period of Henry's life the King and his great subject might feel gratified with a concession in whose attainment mutual esteem seemed so largely to participate. It is not much in the heart of man of a lofty nature to be insensible of honours on occasions like this. Wolsey soon loved the dignity; at first for his own and the King's sake, and

then for its authority—perhaps for its splendour. Since the days of Archbishop Morton¹, no cardinal had been resident in England, for Bainbridge lived in Italy; and the new Cardinal of York, recognizing the loftiness of his dignity, was resolved to invest his office with a magnificence rarely witnessed, even on the Continent. The King seconded his favourite's plans for a "large retinue and superb liveries." Both monarch and minister were men of refined and elegant taste; and the people unmistakably felt well pleased in their insular pride at gazing on the pageants issuing in stately splendour from Greenwich and old Whitehall. Even in that age of gorgeous ceremonial, "before cold puritan sentimentalism had insisted on the unrighteousness of lawn sleeves;" when the sense aches with interminable recitals of cloth of gold, silks, and beautiful tapestries—even then, amidst jewelled mitres and copes, a cardinal in his scarlet robe formed a conspicuous object. But Wolsey was in no manner swayed by the vulgar vanity of appearing "grand" in that light in which the ignorant or the superficial behold the surroundings of a great man. Magnificent in all his notions and in all his doings—in the selection of plate, dress, tapestry, pictures, buildings; the furniture of a chapel, a church, or a palace; the arranging of gardens, of flowers, of fountains; the setting of a ring, or the arrangement of some exquisite jewel; the forms and etiquette of a congress; a procession in heraldic order; or a sumptuous banquet—there was the same regal and classic taste prevailing; the same powerful grasp of little things and of great

¹ In the seventh book of Sir Thomas More's "*Utopia*," is to be found a memoir of this eccentric little Cardinal, to whom More had been a page at sixteen years old.

affairs ; a mind, a soul as “capacious as the sea, and as minute as the sand upon the shore, when minuteness was required ;” he could do nothing petty, nothing mean. Such was the character of the great English Prince-Bishop. He went far to civilize the British nobles ; to elevate the taste of the commercial classes, and accustom the people to distinguish between the barbaric profusion of the past and the treasures of beauty which science and art, working with the same materials, now opened to their awakening discernment. On no occasion did the universality of Wolsey’s genius for organization display itself more signally than at the meeting of the French and English monarchs on the “Field of the Cloth of Gold².” There Wolsey was studied by all—and to all seemed inexhaustible in the graces of his bearing and arrangements.

Of the personal appearance and disposition of Wolsey about this time (1519), perhaps the despatches of Sebastian Giustiniani are the most correct: “He is now about forty-six years of age, very handsome, learned, extremely eloquent, of vast ability, and indefatigable. He alone transacts the same business as that which occupies all the Magisteries and Councils of Venice, both civil and criminal ; and all state affairs are managed by him likewise, let their nature be what it may. He is pensive, and has the reputation of being extremely just. He is the Councillor who rules both the king and the entire realm.” His enemies accounted

² Henry’s retinue amounted to 3997 persons, and 2110 horses ; the Queen’s to 1200, and 778 horses ; Wolsey’s attendants were numerous, and the appointments classic and grand. Budaun, an eminent Greek scholar and traveller, who was a spectator of the royal meetings, describes the astonishment he felt on viewing such scenes of “unparalleled magnificence.”

him haughty and imperious, yet much more humility and moderation than Wolsey possessed could scarcely have escaped the imputation. "Such a sight as this Cardinal presented was not common to the eyes of Christendom." The great nobles could obtain no audience of him until after four or five applications; foreign ambassadors not even then. "He is omnipotent," says Erasmus, writing to Cardinal Grimoni. "All the power of the state is centred in him," is the observation of Giustiniani; "he is, in fact, *ipse rex*." The people declared he was moved by "witchcraft, or something that no man could discover." "Yet," says Dr. Brewer, "undisputed as was the supremacy of this great minister, it was surely no more than might have been expected. In genius, in penetration, in aptitude for business, and indefatigable labour, he had no equal. All despatches addressed to ambassadors abroad or at home passed through his hands; the entire political correspondence of the times was submitted to his perusal and waited for his decision. Before a single measure was submitted to the Privy Council it was first shaped by Wolsey's hands; he managed it, unaided and alone, when it had passed their approval." Foxe (Bishop of Winchester), the only minister of any experience, seldom attended; the Duke of Suffolk dared not offer him opposition. Norfolk, who had endeavoured, and once had partly succeeded in thwarting the Cardinal's authority, had been defeated, and yielded; he was too haughty to conceal a temper not less imperious than Wolsey's, and wanted the flexibility and courtesy of manner required in a successful courtier. Wolsey was "hated by the nobles, knights, and esquires;" he incurred the enmity of the lawyers for sustaining the part of the poor client, by the monopo-

lists and commercial people for watching their dishonest deeds; he was respected and loved by his clergy for the kindness and equity with which he governed the diocese of York and his other ecclesiastical preferments. His "enemies were numerous at home and abroad," but Polydore Vergil was the most malignant and persistent in falsehood. He was deputy-collector of the Pope's annates for Cardinal Hadrian in England, and Wolsey having discovered his misappropriation of Papal moneys, and intriguing with foreign factions, imprisoned him in the Tower. Hence the cause of his enmity. Polydore's imprisonment and subsequent conduct are worthy of consideration. "He languished in prison" until the end of the year, though repeated applications came from the Pope in his favour. In his captivity he addressed the most abject letters to Wolsey for mercy. He told the Cardinal "he had heard with rapture of his elevation to the Cardinal's high estate, and whenever his Eminence would allow him an opportunity to present himself, he would gaze and bow in adoration, and his spirit should rejoice in him as in God his Saviour!" In another letter Polydore prayed that his "punishment might be wholly remitted, and Wolsey's gifts be perfected in him, even as he himself was perfect." In a few months subsequent (1516), Polydore Vergil was liberated by the Cardinal; he then retired to Hertford, and commenced the inditing of a series of attacks on the reputation of Wolsey. He affected "to sneer at his birth; charged him with ingratitude and unkindness to his friends; described his buildings as those of a person possessed of no refined taste; imputed base or sordid motives to him as a judge; ridiculed his cardinal's hat and his gorgeous liveries; represented him

as an ambitious priest, successful only because he was unscrupulous ; distinguished merely for his underhand intrigues in banishing Dr. Foxe and Archbishop Wareham from the Council Chamber ; he was neither a scholar nor a gentleman, but a respectable sort of hedge priest ; a blusterer in Chancery, whose administration of justice was a shadow ; a vulgar upstart, intoxicated with dignities undeserved ; a *parvenu* whose brain was turned by his gilded chair, the gold fringes of his cushion and tablecloth ; his cardinal's hat, which was carried before him by some tall fellow in his livery, and placed conspicuously on the high altar in the chapel royal when mass was sung, was another proof of his vanity and hypocrisy." In this strain Vergil writes of the man whom but a few months before he declared to be endowed with every virtue that could adorn the State or the Church. In a subsequent page the reader will see more as to the general merits of this unamiable and ungrateful foreigner, who filled two lucrative livings in the English Church. If extensive learning, however, was a recommendation to promotion, Polydore had good claims upon his patrons, both in Church and State.

Many statements have been chronicled of the "low birth and presumption of the butcher's dog." Lampons and caricatures were circulated by Wolsey's contemporaries, describing him as the son of a "petty butcher ;" but those stories had no foundation. His father, "Robert Wolsey," was what would be styled now-a-days a "grazier ;" he fed on his own land some two hundred head of cattle, which were purchased by the butchers of the neighbouring towns. In one year a number of his cows died of distemper, "which for a

while embarrassed the family." The Wolseys were never rich, but the family was always respectable and loyal to the Plantagenets and their successors. There is an entry of an "offering" extant, which was made at St. Laurence's Church, Ipswich, to "pray for the souls of Robert Wolsey and his wife Joan, the father and mother of the Dean of Lincoln;" which shows that the family were far above the rank of a butcher—a class who were considered "lowly and mean" in those days. Besides, his father made a will, in which there is no mention of the occupation of a butcher. Polydore Vergil reiterates the assertion of Skelton and others as to the "saucy son of the greasy butcher;" yet, in a letter to Cardinal Hadrian, Polydore states that he "heard from an old inhabitant of Suffolk that the Cardinal's father was a poor gentleman who sold cattle to butchers." Thomas Wolsey was an accomplished Latin scholar; and though he had a distaste for theology, Polydore Vergil admits that he "did not lack abilities as a theologian." Skelton was, if possible, more gross in his remarks than Polydore: he describes the Cardinal as a "mastiff cur," "a butcher's dog," "a man with a greasy genealogy cast out of a butcher's stall." And again, Maister Skelton says,—

"He ruleth all the roast,
With bragging and with boast."

Another accusation against him was that of "eating meat in Lent and other prohibited times," on which the lampoon ran—

"In Lent, for a repast,
He eateth capons stewed,
Pheasant and partridge mewed."

Skelton's accusation had its origin in the fact that Wolsey had a "cold, weak stomach," and his physicians were of opinion that it was absolutely necessary he should daily "partake of fowl cooked in divers ways, and no fish." Nevertheless, he did not adopt their instructions until he had obtained permission from Leo X. The impeachments multiplied, but all were mean and petty.

Giustiniani alleges that two brothers of Wolsey were presented to lucrative livings in the Church, under "discreditable circumstances ;" but the research of Dr. Brewer throws a different light on the subject. "I have" (he says) "found no notice of either brother or any other member of Wolsey's family, with one exception, receiving livings. There is a petition to the Cardinal from one John Fayrechild, son of Elizabeth Wolsey, the Cardinal's sister, desiring some small place as comptroller of the works at Tournai; but the applicant's name does not occur again in communication with any office."

"Proud and haughty," as Wolsey has been described, there were some persons who took the liberty of admonishing him, amongst whom was the unbending Fisher. And Jerningham writes to him "complimenting his Eminence on his taste for music;" and in the same letter he tells him he was "too fond of strong drinks." This accusation was once made by Archbishop Wareham, and contradicted by Fisher, and also by Cavendish, who was in daily intercourse with the Cardinal. Another charge was that he "loved the society of young gentlemen, and entered into their boisterous amusements, and sang and danced with them," and "did not reverently mix with old people." He must, however, have felt a

greater pleasure in the society of those young gentlemen, whose minds were cultivated and stored with learning under his own instruction, than in that of "drunken, dicing lords," the "austere monk of churlish manners," or the dull canon who rarely wandered beyond the boundary of his parish. Few men holding such high and almost irresponsible offices had so many enemies; fewer still possessed of so much power did so little to merit the hostility of the people at large.

Foreigners, especially Italians, complained that Wolsey was "hard of access; that he displayed his resentment too openly; that he adopted too imperious a style for a subject; that he identified himself too much with his own political measures, and proportioned his anger and gratitude accordingly." These statements are, in some instances, exaggerated; indeed, the tales of Polydore Vergil have been embellished by others. The Cardinal's ill health, irritable temper, and multiplicity of business, frequently transported him into a perfect rage at the untimely intrusion of visitors. "On one occasion he rudely seized the Papal Nuncio by the shoulder, declaring that if he did not confess the nature of his communications with France he should be put to the rack³." This was merely a threat, but a very undignified proceeding on the part of a man holding the highest offices in the realm. And again, he sends for Sebastian's secretary, and "scolds him severely." "I charge your ambassador, and you also, not to write any thing out of this kingdom without my consent, under the pain of the King's displeasure, and the heaviest penalties." Whilst speaking in this haughty tone to one of the Pope's embassy he became every moment

³ Brewer's State Papers, vol. i.

more irritated, and he is described as occasionally gnawing a cane he held in his hand. Wolsey may have had warrant enough for his indignation, seeing it has been averred that the Papal Nuncio was an inveterate intriguer, and sometimes made a discreditable use of his office to favour the designs of foreign potentates. The Nuncios in those days, with some honourable exceptions, were haughty and dictatorial. Wareham and Pace, as well as Wolsey, bear testimony to this fact.

How many volumes have been written to defend the reputation of the English Reformers, and how have they succeeded? Yet, after all, the truth is gradually emerging into light. The Camden Society, Dr. Maitland, Dr. Hook, Rev. Mr. Blunt, and even Mr. Froude, have in part rejected the portraits hitherto accepted of the great originals. Forty-four years ago Sharon Turner, in his "*History of England*," stated that he was induced to undertake his labour in consequence of the "misrepresentations that were recently chronicled against the good and holy men who promoted the English Reformation." Acting in this spirit, Mr. Turner presents King Henry and his spiritual coadjutors as "men of stainless character, virtue, honour, truth, and disinterestedness in the cause of the Gospel;" whilst the Papal party were "sinking under the weight of immorality, hypocrisy, sloth, and every thing that is ungodly." Wolsey is an especial object of Mr. Turner's "indignant fury." He charges him with being the "author of all the abuses which occurred in Church and State." He then presents a character of the Cardinal which, considering the real facts, might have suited the pages of Hall, Foxe, Speed, or Burnet.

Here is Mr. Turner's portrait: "Pride, vengeance, vanity, and dissimulation diminished Wolsey into an egotist, an actor, a hypocrite, a trickster, a tyrant, an ambidexter, a coxcomb, and a pantomimical puppet." The reader has already seen that every enemy of the olden creed, every advocate for confiscation and revolution, was the natural and deadly enemy of the great conservative minister. If the motive of Mr. Turner was loyalty to defend the characters of the primal reformers, could he not have done so more honestly and effectually by *proving* their virtues, than by ascribing, with mad fury, a monopoly of the foulest crimes to their adversaries? Denouncing one man as a demon does not make that man's opponent an angel, and thus the promiscuous praise of Mr. Turner is just as trustworthy as his random vilification. Erasmus, who knew Wolsey personally, attributes to him all the great reforms in morals and religion, the revival of letters, the better administration of justice and the laws, the general prosperity of the British people, and the peace of Europe. The great scholar, in a Latin letter concerning the Cardinal, said of him, "But the wonderful ease and kindness of your manner, obvious and plain to all, so far exclude all envy that men no less love the goodness of your nature than admire the greatness of your fortune." Yet when the Cardinal fell, the time-serving satirist and worldly scholar veered with the rest, and Erasmus joined his shrill voice to the chorus of Wolsey's enemies and traducers.

Little can be said of Wolsey's merits as a priest until the period of his political fall; but as a statesman he transcended all the ministers of his age.

His conduct towards Queen Catherine presents his

character as an ecclesiastic in a painful light. It has been contended that he did no more than Gardiner, Bonner, Tunstal, Edward Foxe, and other political priests, to promote the King's views; but it must be remembered that these men were, in the early stages of the divorce case, merely the agents of Wolsey. By-the-way, it is a somewhat remarkable fact, that when swayed by his avarice to retain the great dower of Katherine of Arragon, Henry VII. desired to transfer her hand to his son Henry, Archbishop Wareham, of Canterbury, on the ground that it might give rise to future complications, strongly opposed it; but on Katherine's explanations and the King's entreaties moving Pope Julius to grant the dispensation for marriage, Wareham withdrew his opposition, but never expressed his concurrence. Eighteen years subsequently, he solemnly warned Gardiner and Bonner of the results that might arise from a divorce which must sever the English monarch from his adhesion to Rome; and which, if thought desirable to be justified, must end in the creation of another religion to sanction it. Wareham almost lived to see his prophecy fulfilled, and heard around his dying bed the name of Thomas Cranmer whispered as his successor. There seems to be mystery and inconsistency in the conduct of Wolsey regarding the divorce. It is impossible to defend his policy in the case. A letter from Wolsey to Pope Clement is still extant, describing Anna Boleyn in glowing terms—her "goodness, her virtue, and her attachment to the olden creed." There is reason to believe that Anna saw this letter before her kinsman, Bryan, presented it to the Pontiff. And his holiness was a sufficient master of intrigue to understand that it had been written for the purpose of

further delay, which subsequent circumstances proved to be the only policy adopted—on this occasion, at least. When, however, Henry condescended to reveal to Wolsey his intention of marrying Anna Boleyn, the Cardinal uttered a shriek and fell at the King's feet. The monarch was alarmed, and raising him up spoke in kindly terms to him, and recurred to their early friendship. The question was again submitted to him by the King, but the minister would not, could not, agree; he knelt before his Highness for hours, appealing to his pride and honour as a king not to enter upon this marriage, but found his great powers of persuasion fruitless; then, like a courtier, he affected a wish to promote the King's union with Anna Boleyn; still he urged delay, alleging etiquette and other matters as an excuse.

Guicciardini states that Wolsey had more than once sought to convert Clement's "embarrassments into an enlargement of his own political and ecclesiastical power;" and Le Grand makes similar statements, which are borne out by the Cardinal's own confidential correspondence.

One of his last letters to Sir Gregorie Cassalis (July, 1529), if it means any thing, or was not written to please the King, is decidedly in favour of the divorce. He threatens the Pontiff with the military power of England if he does not "settle the question within the King's own realm." "Nor shall it," he added, "ever be seen that the King's cause shall be ventilated or decided in any place out of his own realm; but that if his Highness should come at any time to the Court of Rome, he would do the same with such a main and army royal as should be formidable to the Pope and all Italy⁴." In

⁴ State Papers, vol. vii., p. 193.

this despatch—almost one of the last acts of Wolsey—he wrote as the proud English statesman, not as the Roman Cardinal. When in the zenith of his power, Wolsey evinced scant respect for the spiritual Head of his Church. At one time he undertook to “mould” Leo X. entirely to the wishes of King Henry and his allies. “Blind men,” he observed, “need a guide;” and he made no doubt of his ability to lead the Pope. Boastful as was this sarcasm concerning the *dilettante* and princely Pontiff, it was not altogether without reason. Nevertheless, after a long diplomatic contest, carried on between Pope and Cardinal, in a mode not qualified to edify those who looked to them for less terrestrial practices, circumstances seem to have obliterated all traces of victory or defeat. Fighting with political foils, the fortune of the contest was various; and at length Pope and Cardinal appear to have concurred in a drawn battle.

At a later period we find Clement’s secretary writing to Campeggio, expressing his confidence in Wolsey. “His Holiness,” he states, “knows from experience the favourable disposition of the Cardinal of York towards the interests of the Apostolic See.” Were the “interests” referred to by the Pope political or religious? The question depends for its solution on the character of the Pope; but one cannot help reflecting how much the spiritual interests of the Church were neglected, and the virtue, truth, and honour of her ecclesiastics injured, by intermingling in the turmoil and deceit of politics.

The Bishop of Bayonne states that the Cardinal contemplated a marriage between Henry and Madame René, a daughter of Louis XII., “only eighteen years of age, amiable and handsome.” (Le Grand, App.,

pp. 158. 166.) The scheme ended in a failure, the particulars of which have never been accurately recorded; nor the fact, as to whether the Cardinal knew the secret intentions of his royal master as to Anna Boleyn at that juncture. Hall, on the authority of Campeggio's secretary, states that Queen Katherine "declared the Cardinal to be her most implacable enemy, telling the King that she was too old for him." On the other hand, it may be stated that Hall had a personal dislike to Wolsey, who refused him "some favours."

In a letter of Wolsey to Henry, from France, he proposed the widow of the Duc d'Alençon "as a suitable wife for his Highness." When the question was privately made known to this Princess, she indignantly refused to listen to the proposal; adding, that "a marriage between her and the King of England could not be solemnized without shame to herself and wretchedness and death to Queen Katherine, whose character as a wife and a queen no one had ever questioned." There can be no doubt, that for some years his Eminence was in favour of the divorce of Katherine, if the consent of the Court of Rome were given to it. He had no objection to coerce the Pontiff, or make representations to create alarm; yet he hesitated to place himself in absolute antagonism to the Head of his Church, which is a proof—if one were necessary—that he had no sympathies with the Reformers, or with the means by which they sought to promote their opinions.

Historians differ on this question. Herbert affirms that one of the articles of impeachment against Wolsey was, "that by connivance he encouraged the growth of heresy, and protected and acquitted some notorious delinquents against the Church." The same writer

observes, that "no one believed one-third of the charges preferred against the Cardinal;" and Hume contends that the disciples of the Reformation met with little severity during the administration of Wolsey. The shrewd Cavendish, who "noted every scene, and listened with all his ears" to what was passing, ought to be a good authority as to what occurred between Kingston and Wolsey. In his last farewell address, he (Wolsey) "sent a solemn warning to the King to have a vigilant eye to the proceedings of that new and pernicious sect called Lutherans; that they may not increase in his dominions through his own negligence." After a long pause, the Cardinal, looking steadfastly at Kingston, said, "When I am dead, the King, and many others too, will remember my words." Mr. Froude has his own views of this matter. He states that "the Reformers did not love the Cardinal of York; and they had no reason to love him." In another passage the same writer remarks: "Before a year had passed, they (the Protestants) would gladly have accepted again the hated Cardinal, to escape the philosophic mercies of Sir Thomas More." And then the "number of English Protestants at this time it is difficult to conjecture." A candid acknowledgment. His statements rest upon the authority of a MS. in the Rolls House, which is in some few respects correct, although at variance with other documents bearing on those times. The organization of disaffected and communistic men under the title of "Christian Brothers," was as near to the Protestant Church as the factious and seditious Lollards of previous days, whose claims to Protestant principles Dean Hook has investigated and disposed of. In vol. ii., page 71, Mr. Froude makes another admission as to

the condition of affairs in 1528. "No rival theology," he writes, "had as yet shaped itself into formularies." Yet he deplors the persecution of Protestantism at this very time! Another instance of this delusion as to historical facts occurs in Lord Campbell's account of Sir T. More's trial. After lamenting the verdict pronounced by a London jury—a jury chosen by Cromwell's agents—the noble author says: "But it is possible that being all *zealous Protestants*, who looked with detestation on our intercourse with the Pope, and considering that the King's supremacy could not be honestly doubted, they concluded that by convicting a Papist they should be doing good service to religion and the State; and that, misled by the sophistry and eloquence of the presiding judge (Andley), they believed that they returned an honest verdict" (Campbell's *Chancellors of England*, vol. i. pages 575-6). England, however, was just as little Protestant when More went to the scaffold as at the time of Wolsey's fall. Dr. Brewer, who must be considered the highest authority in existence on the subject in dispute, states that Lutheranism appears to have been almost unknown in England when Wolsey was at the pinnacle of his power. How Wolsey could have encouraged, as Herbert and Hume say, or persecuted, as alleged by Mr. Froude, men whose religion he acknowledges not to have been fashioned till the next reign, we leave to be digested by the reader. In fact, twenty years after Wolsey's death (1549-50), "eleven-twelfths of the English nation still retained a strong attachment to the creed of their ancestors." This statement is borne out by the records of the times and the private letters of the leading Reformers themselves. Here is a confidential note written by a member

of King Edward's Council on the 7th of July, 1549, to the Protector Somerset: "The use of 'the old religion' (says Paget) is forbidden by a law, and the use of the new one is not yet printed in the stomachs of eleven or (of) twelve parts of the realm, no matter what countenance men *make outwardly* to please those whom they see the power resteth in." This State Paper, which even Strype quotes (ii. p. 100), is a pretty strong proof that More's jury were swayed far more by their instant fears than by their possible Protestantism.

Dr. Richard Pace was one of the remarkable men connected with Henry the Eighth's government, and was constantly employed in foreign diplomacy. Historians make little mention of him, and he is seldom noticed, except to be described as a "knave or fool." He was very far from being either. He was faithful, honourable, and patriotic as an English diplomatist; yet more than one writer questions his integrity. Bergenroth alleges that he was friendly to the Emperor Maximilian, and subsequently the secret agent of Charles V. These assertions are put forth on the allegation that a memorandum was found at Corunna of the Emperor's Council, in which it was proposed to offer Wolsey a "sop in the mouth," and "if he accepts it," "a pension to Dr. Richard Pace." There is no evidence, however, produced by Bergenroth to show that these offers were ever made, still less that they were accepted. Dr. Brewer, *State Papers*, (vols. i. ii. iii., part ii.,) presents an interesting memoir of the diplomacy, tact, and rare ability with which Pace and Wolsey maintained the interests and the honour of England on the Continent. Yet, notwithstanding the friendship which existed between the Cardinal and Pace, a failure in some diplomatic affair brought upon the latter, from

the hand of Wolsey, a consignment to the Tower for two years—a proof that no skill, no previous accord, condoned mistakes made in certain kingdoms.

During the meeting of Henry, Francis, and their Queens at the “Cloth of Gold,” Pace, as the Dean of St. Paul’s, preached before the allies the Latin Sermon, in the Royal Chapel. In his discourse he congratulated France and England on the meeting of their sovereigns, and made an eloquent oration on the blessings of peace. The religious ceremony on this occasion was grand and imposing. Two Cardinals, two Legates, four Archbishops, and ten Bishops, were in attendance on Wolsey, who sang the High Mass. The “air was perfumed with incense and flowers,” and the altars of the church were hung with cloth of gold tissue, embroidered with pearls; cloth of gold covered the walls and desks, basins and censers, cruets, and other vessels of the same materials, lent a lustre to its service. On the grand altar, shaded by a magnificent canopy of large proportions, stood twenty-four enormous candlesticks, and other ornaments of solid gold. Twelve golden images of the Apostles, as large as children of four years old, astonished the sight of the English visitors. The copes and vestments of the officiating prelates were cloth of tissue powdered with red roses brought from the looms of Florence, and woven in one piece, thickly studded with gold, precious stones, and jewellery. The “seats and other appointments” were of corresponding taste and splendour. A proud contemplation to the English on-looker to behold Wolsey, as the Cardinal of York, standing at the great altar of this regal chapel, pronouncing the benediction, surrounded by four archbishops, two legates, ten inferior prelates, two kings and their queens, with the

nobles and fair dames of England and France kneeling in the royal presence ; then, as they rose, the sudden burst of enchanting music, the roar of artillery, and the acclamations of the multitude without.

On this memorable occasion, there knelt behind Queen Katherine a sweet-featured maiden, then in the early spring of life, whose mind seemed engrossed with pious influences. Wrapped in devotion, she appeared all unconscious of her beautiful presence, her speaking eyes turned heavenwards, and her glossy auburn hair reaching in silken ringlets to her girdle. This, the fairest amongst the galaxy of the royal lady's suite, was Anna Boleyn, then little dreaming of her wayward fate.

To return to Pace. He was born in Hampshire in 1482 ; received his early education at Padua, and subsequently graduated at Oxford ; next, he held the office of Latin secretary to Cardinal Bambridge, and resided in Rome for some time ; when, recalled by his sovereign, he entered on the diplomatic service. In this department of government he was eminently successful ; he was appointed Dean of Exeter, and also of St. Paul's, and whilst acting as Secretary of State, and occasionally on foreign missions, he never neglected his clerical duties. Both in matters of Church and State his administrative powers were considerable ; he was a man of stern principles, courtly and elegant in his address, unostentatious, benevolent, affable, and condescending. He was an uncompromising enemy of the "new learning," and wrote a book on the "lawfulness of Queen Katherine's marriage." Knowing what would be the consequences of such a publication, he resigned his livings in Church and State, and retired to Stepney, where he passed the remainder of his days "amidst

books and flowers.” He died in 1532, enjoying to his death the esteem and friendship of such men as Erasmus, More, and Pole.

Next in importance to Pace stood Sir Robert Wingfield, who had been a long time Ambassador at the Court of the Emperor Maximilian. He was more remarkable for fidelity to his country and for his own personal integrity than for diplomatic subtlety. He was no match for the wily German monarch, who was able to read the mind of the envoy, and improve the knowledge to his own advantage.

Sir Robert belonged to a class of statesmen then rapidly disappearing before a younger, more versatile, and expert generation, of whom Wolsey might be considered as the chief. He speaks of himself as living in the days of Henry VI.—of his long experience as a negotiator—of the white hairs “which he had gotten in the cold snowy mountains of Germany, which have the power to make all hares and partridges that abide amongst them, where my beard (which I have promised to bear to our Lady of Walsingham, an’ God give me life), is wax so white, that whilst I shall wear it I need none other mean to cause women rejoice little in my company.” He had the quaintness and precision of a man of a then old school, and both are visible in his conversation, his letters, and his handwriting, with a tinge of pedantry not unbecoming a man of his years, and displaying itself in the use of Latinized English and classical references. He was a little proud of himself, but more proud of the Wingfields, as he was bound to be; was easily hurt, but bore no malice. “If there was any creature in the world that he hated, it was a Frenchman. He devoutly believed that the French had

been at the bottom of all the evils that had happened in Christendom during the last 400 years. . . . He was, in short, the most guileless, upright, humane, and valiant of all bachelor knights, as he called himself; stiff and formal, somewhat conceited and pedantical, but full of a wise, gracious, hearty, and forgiving humanity, which was not the worse because it had a smack of his peculiar failings. I know not whether it was more to his credit or Maximilian's that he had been so long in the court of the latter, and yet persisted in believing that the Emperor was the best, the wisest, the most profound, the most honest and patriotic of mortal men. 'Seeing is believing;' but no seeing would have converted Sir Robert. Had he beheld the Emperor in the very act of the most flagrant turpitude, he would have set it down to the score of a subtle and inscrutable policy designed to cover some act of sublime virtue, which in the end would ensure the peace and the happiness of Christendom. If the Emperor ran away from the battle field, if he falsified his word, if he shuffled and prevaricated, Sir Robert imputed it all to that mysterious wisdom which must needs reside in the heart of an emperor. Maximilian, though no genius himself, found little difficulty in managing such a man. To Sir Robert he was universally respectful; listened to his tedious speeches without betraying signs of impatience, and treated him occasionally and his despatches with most magnificent courtesy. He professed to make Sir Robert the depository of his secrets; to unbosom to Sir Robert those deeper feelings and designs he could trust to no others, not even to his most intimate councillors. To the proud and susceptible Englishman he spoke of his King in 'the

most hearty and affectionous manner ;' raised his bonnet when he received or referred to his despatches ; had tears in his eyes (the veteran deceiver!) when he thought what a virtuous, loving, and noble son he had in Wingfield's master. The King's remembrances, he said, were as comfortable to him 'as the figure of the crucifix which is brought by the curé to his parishien that lieth in extremis' " (Brewer's "State Papers").

The study of the diplomatic correspondence of Wolsey's time enables Mr. Brewer to form an opinion of the mode in which the Cardinal managed his agents abroad. "An inferior man," he writes, "would have dismissed Wingfield from his post ; would have made a fuss, and superseded him. Not so he : to the credit of the reign a freedom of opinion and dissent was allowed in official men which disappeared shortly afterwards. Omnipotent as Wolsey was, and impatient of contradiction, he seldom used his power to remove one inferior from his post because that inferior thought fit sometimes to disagree with him. If an ambassador failed in the expectations that had been formed of him it was deemed more discreet to send an inferior agent, as occasion might arise, to supplement his deficiencies." Such a policy was not without advantage. The long experience of a man of inferior talents compensated for brighter natural powers ; the credit gained at foreign courts by the permanency of his appointment gave respect and influence to the agent. So far from employing his authority in recalling the representatives at foreign courts, he with general kindness refused their applications for dismissal, especially when they demanded it in a momentary fit of disgust, or were fretted into impatience by a reprimand, which he sometimes

administered with considerable severity. Pace and Wingfield died before the revolution in religion took place in England; but they did not omit to condemn the doctrines of Luther and Melancthon then exciting Germany.

There was a striking contrast between Wolsey and his royal Master's early contemporaries. Age had not yet exhausted the ambition of Louis XII., or diminished the activity of his intellect, but it had made ravages on his person. Long before his death (at the age of fifty-three) he is spoken of as an infirm old man, the victim of disease. His treasures had been exhausted in ruinous wars; he had neither the inclination nor the means to indulge in pomp and splendour like the English King. The "bankrupt Emperor" Maximilian, the "man of few pence," as he was styled in derision in other courts, had even less means than Louis for rivalling the profuse splendour of the English Court. All his ingenuity was directed to the means of raising money, but as his acquisitions were squandered as soon as obtained he still continued needy. In the pursuit of funds there was no meanness to which he would not stoop. He did not scruple to "make lying assertions to ambassadors and violate his solemn promises." "He was," says Brewer, "the most bare-faced and importunate of beggars: he felt no delicacy in appropriating to his own use the moneys entrusted to him for other purposes, yet he set up a claim for fastidiousness and modesty." In the English camp, at Tournai, Maximilian once took pay and served as a soldier. Taylor, the clerk of the Parliament, made an entry in his diary as to having seen him during his "eccentric movements." "The Emperor Maxi-

milian," he observes, "is of middle height, with open and manly countenance, and pale complexion. He has a snub nose and a grey beard; is affable, frugal, and an enemy to pomp." The portrait of Ferdinand of Spain is not flattering. He was suspicious, mean, niggardly, and proud; and his ungenerous conduct estranged his courtiers, and the ablest of the Spanish grandees. He was, however, a man of ability, and possessed much administrative talent. James IV. of Scotland, unlike his barbarous nobles, admired learning, and would appear "right royal" if he had the means to do so. He studied Latin under Erasmus; his correspondence with Polydore Vergil shows that he was a man of taste and ability; but he was vain, obstinate, and vacillating. He wished to be thought chivalrous, yet he violated his honour and his oath whenever it suited his interest or policy; and the battle of Flodden Field was a fatal monument of his disregard of treaties. Charles V. and Francis I. had not yet ascended their respective thrones; and the people of England had reason at this juncture, at least, to regard their King as peerless amongst his crowned compeers, and to feel proud likewise of his distinguished Minister. This period was then accounted amongst the happiest theretofore experienced in this kingdom.

THE FALL OF WOLSEY.

THE first turning point in Wolsey's fortunes occurred in the departure of Campeggio. The King took leave of the Legate at Grafton, where Wolsey was also present; and it was then rumoured that the Cardinal had lost the royal confidence. Those reports came from

the Brandons, the Grays, the Howards, and the Boleyns—all implacable enemies to the Cardinal. But so marked was the ill feeling exhibited towards him by those nobles that Henry relented, and to the surprise of the courtiers spoke in a friendly tone to his old favourite. "But he was not invited to the royal table on that day (Sept. 19); he dined with the courtiers, whom he despised." In the evening he had another interview with the King in his closet, which lasted three hours; and having bid him a friendly "good night," Henry requested his attendance at nine of the clock on the following morning. This long conference alarmed the enemies of Wolsey, and that night there were several private communications made to Anna Boleyn to "use all her influence with the King against his Minister;" she was reminded, amongst other things, of the deception practised by Wolsey in her case; wishing "to make her a mistress, but not a Queen." It did not require much incentive to excite the enmity of Anna, for she was ever eager to disgrace or destroy those who crossed the path of her ambition. In the morning the Cardinal waited on King Henry, but to his surprise the Monarch was on horseback, and "going out to ride with Lady Anna." After the "exchange of kindly salutations" Henry departed. The "learned King" and his great Minister never met again. In a few days (October 9) the Attorney-General filed two bills against Wolsey in the King's Bench, charging him with having, as Legate, offended against the Statute of the 16th of Richard the Second, known as the Statute of "Præmunire." Even the lawyers of the day considered the prosecution as "arbitrary, despotic, and illegal;" and many of them were in doubt as

to whether the Legatine Court could be brought within the operation of the Act: the Cardinal had on former occasions obtained the King's license, and was therefore "authorized to hold the court." The Cardinal offered no opposition; made no defence; resigned the Great Seal; placed the whole of his personal property, estimated at 500,000 crowns, at the King's disposal. "All I possess," said he, "I have received from the King's Highness; and I now return all with pleasure to my benefactor." But "the benefactor," or his prompters were not satisfied; a demand was made "for every thing he possessed." He now surrendered all; "keeping not even a blanket or a shirt." He was "commanded to retire to Esher, a country house attached to the See of Winchester." His fallen condition did not yet satisfy the malice of his enemies. We are told that from the "courtier down to the turbulent clodpoles, all classes attended in vast numbers to see his departure from London, to hoot and insult the fallen Minister;" but as Wolsey had the prescience to take a different route from the one expected, his feelings were spared humiliation, and the fickleness of human favour another shameful display of its traditional worthlessness.

The Bishop of Bayonne, who visited Wolsey before his departure from the metropolis, draws a melancholy picture of his forlorn condition. "I have," he says, "been to visit the Cardinal in his distress, and have witnessed the most striking change of his fortune. He explained to me his hard case in the worst rhetoric that was ever heard. Both his tongue and his heart failed him. He recommended himself to the pity of the King and Madame (Francis I. and his mother) with sighs and tears; and at last left me without having said any thing

near so moving as his appearance. His face is dwindled to one-half its natural size. In truth his misery is such that his enemies, Englishmen as they are, cannot help pitying him. Still they will carry things to extremities. As for his Legation, the seals, &c., he thinks no more of them. He is willing to give up any thing, even the shirt from his back, and to live in a hermitage, if the King would desist from his displeasure" (Le Grand, iii. 37). Henry, strange to say, at this time sent him "secret messages, assuring him of his friendship." The Cardinal had the weakness to believe in those professions, but he was soon convinced of the motives which prompted them. Henry did not wish Wolsey to die until he had at least attempted to prove that he deserved death. Herbert, Henry's panegyrist does not believe the charges preferred against the Cardinal, and Cavendish and Le Grand are of the same opinion. The articles of impeachment were forty-four, and were signed by fourteen peers, amongst whom were the Dukes of Suffolk and Norfolk. These articles were carried in the Lords; but the King instructed Cromwell, then in the Commons, to have them rejected. The Cardinal's health was now giving way, and he was attacked with fever (about Christmas). Hearing of his "old favourite's" illness, Henry exclaimed in the presence of his courtiers, "God forbid that he should die! I would not lose him for twenty thousand pounds." He ordered three of his own physicians to go immediately to Esher to attend him; he also sent a special messenger to assure Wolsey of his "love and esteem for him." He next induced Anna Boleyn to send a tablet of gold as a memorial of reconciliation and good feeling⁵.

⁵ State Papers, Cavendish and Le Grand.

The "religious orders," writes Ganganelli, "have not been gifted with infallibility, nor with indefectibility." Some of them were very much less guilty of the crimes ascribed to them by their enemies than possessors of the virtues attributed to them by their friends.

When Wolsey fell, the "mainstay and upholder" of the Papal power was gone; and the priesthood whom he had elevated to the highest positions in the State, and whose secular privileges he maintained with a high hand, were now about to share in his change of fortune. They envied him for his greatness, and disliked him because he told them of their errors; they had not the foresight nor the wisdom to hearken to his advice—they did not set their house in order to meet the coming storm, but became in some instances reckless and defiant; and again high-placed ecclesiastics appeared as "fore-thoughtful sycophants," begging for mercy before they were impeached; indulging in the delusion that they could, with gold, conciliate Thomas Cromwell and his commissioners, who accepted their "offerings," and still pursued the givers. Lingard remarks that "instead of uniting in their common defence they seem to have awaited their fate with the apathy of despair." At a later period they lost all fitting courage. "The clergy and monks," observes the Rev. Mr. Blunt, "fell into an utter panic; and the great body of the latter, especially, were ready to lie down like an unarmed peasantry before a troop of Cossacks." The terror-stricken nuns, who were cruelly treated, may be excused for adopting such a course. Although there were hundreds—perhaps thousands—amongst the monks and friars who would cheerfully ascend the scaffold, there were few who had the vigour

to speak at the "right time or in the right place;" and when the hour of trial came, there were not many Forests, Petos, and Elstons to confront their enemies. The bolder course was the safest. If the religious orders had appealed to the love and reverence of the people whom their predecessors had treated like faithful guardians for centuries, the country would have pronounced in their favour. They were a powerful body in the State; and, judging from documents before us, there can be no doubt that the masses would have successfully taken up their defence. But the orders were divided by dissension and jealousy; and the rivalry of precedent and mode of discipline caused long and bitter disputes. They were far from being united in love, although accordant in faith; and the result was the triumph of Cromwell.

To return to Wolsey. A reconciliation with the King seemed probable. He was allowed to exchange Esher for Richmond, where he spent much time with the Fathers of the Charterhouse. Here he "discoursed with great earnestness on the necessity there existed for frequent preaching and instruction to the people;" those "heretics," said he, "are smart, intelligent men, and they may possibly find their way into England. We should be prepared for them." His enemies, however, resumed their work; they would not have him "come so near the court." He was ordered to retire two hundred miles from London; but the King further considering his case, wrote letters to "various squires and nobles recommending them to visit the Cardinal, and be civil unto him, and ask him to make merry at their homes." Wolsey's altered mien, his generosity and urbanity, won the esteem of the people

of the northern districts; he did not, appear at their "banquets, or make merry as they expected;" he gave himself up almost wholly to spiritual matters; and on every Sunday and holiday he rode to some village church, where he celebrated the Divine office; he frequently preached twice a day to the peasantry; he heard the confessions of outcasts and outlaws; he enjoined the priests to preach sermons on "holidays as well as Sundays;" and to "explain to their flocks the history of the Catholic Church." He made minute inquiry as to the "good or bad feeling" that might have prevailed in rural districts; he went to the humble cottage, the lowliest homestead—on this mission of charity—and reconciled those who had been long at enmity with one another. The "bad became reformed through his admonitions;" the unfaithful and unkind husband appeared altered in his domestic relations, and confessed that the great Cardinal "had taught him to be what he should be to his family." Wolsey's labours at this time were unceasing, and he seemed bent to excel Bishop Fisher as a priest: he sent "provisions and words of comfort to widows and orphans," and preached especially to young maidens to preserve their virtue and chastity; that "all beauty faded and perished when virtue fled;" he recommended early marriages to those who had sufficient means. He seemed now to have felt, and wished to realize, the character of a minister of Christ; and in the few months he spent in the north he accomplished more for the practice of religion than perhaps he had ever done from the period of his ordination to that of his fall as a statesman. "In his domestic intercourse," writes Oldgate, "he became wonderfully changed, and the proud Cardinal had vanished

from the scene." His hospitality about this time was "large and kindly, but no splendour or extravagance;" every squire in the district was welcome to his dining-hall, whenever they chose to visit him; apartments were also set aside with "right merry cheer for the yeoman, and even the peasant;" a considerable number of women and children received food daily. He conversed in brief words and friendly tone with almost every one who approached his house and grounds—and they were hundreds—inquiring as to their mode of life, their families, &c.; he employed three hundred mechanics and labourers in repairing the churches of the diocese, and the houses of the clergy, to whom he was very kind. The more he was known, the more he was loved; those to whom in the days of his prosperity he had been an object of hatred now spoke well of him. Perhaps the truest account of his conduct is to be found in Thomas Cromwell's letters, which present him in an amiable light, "performing so many good offices for the people with so little means." The King heard those accounts with satisfaction, and sent him money, which was not expended on "luxuries," as has been alleged, "but in assisting the needy." A Puritan writer presents an interesting picture of Wolsey's retirement at Cawood when "relieved from the burden of the State." "None was better beloved than he, after he had been there a while. He gave Bishops a good example how they might win men's hearts. There were few holy-days but he would ride five or six miles from his house; now to this parish church, now to that; and thence cause one of his priests to make a goodly sermon unto the people. He sat among them for a while; and then said mass

before all the parish. . . He brought his dinner with him, and invited many of the people of the parish to partake of the same. He inquired 'if there was any grudge or ill-feeling between neighbours; and if there were, after the dinner was over, he sent for the parties to meet him at the church, where he made them all friends again.'” In the absence of the clergy the Cardinal walked on foot to attend the deathbed of persons in fever and other infectious diseases. A young priest having refused from fear to attend a man in some fearful disease, the Cardinal suspended him, stating that it was the duty of a confessor to face every danger in order to give the rites of the Church to a dying sinner.

Every thing promised fair for his restoration to power, or at least to the King's friendship. But the troubled waters seemed destined to return. The enmity of the “night-crow” was not extinguished: it only slumbered for a more fatal moment. Anna Boleyn and the party which utilized her found by accident a pretext to impeach the Cardinal for high treason. In his restored zeal for religion Wolsey entered into correspondence with the Pope; Cavendish states that his letters to the Pontiff were “intended to promote a reconciliation between the King and the Head of the Church;” but those who projected the monastic confiscations represented the matter in a different light to Henry, who suddenly issued a mandate for the apprehension of Wolsey. He was arrested at Cawood on the 4th of November (1530). He betrayed no appearance of offending. The “King's Highness,” said he, “has not a more loyal subject in his realm than I am. There is not living on the earth a man who can

look me in the face and charge me with untruth or dishonourable dealings. I seek no favour but to be at once confronted with my accusers." Little is known of the real charges preferred against Wolsey; but judging from the general character and motives of those who made them, most probably every accusation was plausibly set forth. Lord Herbert, whose sources of information were undoubted, declares that he does not credit the treasonable charges preferred against him; and the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk "hesitated to believe" that he was guilty. Those noblemen, be it remembered, were both enemies of Wolsey, and, at this time, powerful and implacable. The policy of the Boleyn party was to arouse the suspicions of the King, and in this course they succeeded.

The Cardinal's interview with Sir Henry Norris, who brought him a ring as a token of the King's "returning friendship," presented a distressing scene; his hopes revived for a moment, but only to disappear. "Gentle Norris" (said he), "if I were lord of a realm, the one half of it would be an insufficient reward to give you for your pains and words of comfort. But, alas! I have nothing left me but the clothes on my back; therefore take this small reward," giving him a little chain of gold with a cross. "When I was in prosperity I would not have parted with it for a thousand pounds; wear it for my sake, and remember me when I am gone." He made a present of his "court fool" (Patch) to the King. "I trust his Highness will accept him well, for surely for a nobleman's pleasure he is worth a thousand pounds." The fool left his "good master" with great reluctance, for "it took six yeomen to carry him away." The King treated Patch with kindness,

often speaking to him of the Cardinal with reverence and seeming affection.

To few men is accorded the stoicism of confronting good and evil fortune with a mind unmoved. The histories of Greece and Rome, in the days of their heroes, present a few such noble examples; and amongst Christian martyrs have been found most edifying instances. But the temperament of the Cardinal was not so loftily unyielding. When he became aware of his altered condition and the exaltation of his enemies, he "cried like a child, and sobbed with the accents of a deserted woman." Such is the description of Father Longland, who told him "to take comfort, and remember that he was a priest of God, and could now labour to save souls for the King of kings; that he should cast away his vanity and pride, and become a missionary in the vineyard of the Lord Jesus; that his pride brought him to his present changed fortune." There was a time when no man, not even a Carthusian Father, would have addressed the Cardinal of York in the words of Longland; but incurable misfortune is a strong aid to conviction, and the inevitable a potent support to philosophy. So the Cardinal accepted the situation, and sought peace in the performance of duties whose importance he had never, even in the very zenith of his power, seemed willing to ignore.

He ordered inventories to be made of all his plate, furniture, jewellery, tapestry, books, &c., and the same to be presented to the King, with his mansions, parks, groves, and gardens. "From my good King I have received all I possess, and to his Highness I now give back all that his liberality and goodness conferred on me." The King's retainers, in taking possession of

the Cardinal's property, outraged propriety and humanity. They "did not," says a spectator, "leave him a blanket to keep out the cold at night, nor a dish or plate to eat his food on."

The original catalogue of the Cardinal's effects now in the British Museum occupies forty folio pages. It is a curious collection, amongst which appear costly velvets, carpets, hangings, curtains, silks, rich clothes, linen, beds, and furniture, enough "to arrange a dozen palaces." The tapestry was costly and splendid, in pieces from seven to ten yards long. As this production of human art then partly took the place which pictures subsequently occupied, it may not be uninteresting to enumerate a few of the subjects of its workmanship. Most were from the Scriptures, some from romances, and others from nature, life, or fancy. Of the first class, four pieces with the story of Abraham, twelve with the Old and New Law, six of Esther, seven of Samson, eight of Solomon, nine of Susannah, ten of Jacob, four of Judith, twelve of Joseph, six of David, seven of the Baptist, four of our Saviour's Passion; others on Samuel, Tobias, Moses, the Forlorn Son, Nebuchadnezzar, and the Madonna. The subjects from romance were St. George killing the Dragon, the Three Kings of Cologne, the Nine Worthies, Estrageas, Hercules, Priamus, Emperor Octavian, and L'Amante, or the Romance of the Rose. Amongst the imaginative pieces were the Sun with his Beams, Hunting a Wild Boar, Two Children saved from drowning by an Angel, Pilgrimage of the Life of Man, the Wheel of Fortune, and many other subjects for the lovers of the fine arts.

The cost of Wolsey's different establishments was

upwards of £30,000 per annum, an enormous sum at the commencement of the sixteenth century. He had 800 servants in various stations; and employed some 2500 artizans and labourers, all of whom were treated in a liberal and kindly manner. Some of the future Puritans having denounced his "profuse expenditure," stating that "the money should have been expended in feeding the poor," the Cardinal replied, "I am not aware that any man, woman, or child are without food in any district where my authority prevails. I wish to encourage honest industry, not lazy pauperism. Many of my people were in need when they came into my service: they are now in a goodly condition for their station—saving, frugal, temperate, and virtuous. I feel a pleasure in promoting the comforts of the peasant and working (artizan) class: the lazy, the drunken, and the dishonest shall not eat of my bread." And there were times when the most fallen were the objects of his compassion. The humblest of his tenants "were cared for and made comfortable." He would not, like modern landlords, take the word of an agent on such matters; he "saw with his own eyes, and judged for himself." Even when "stripped of a great proportion of his income" he kept a hospitable house in the north, "with plenty of meat and drink for all comers, rich or poor, and with ready alms for the most necessitous." When residing at Southwell (Newark), the number of his servants and retainers was reduced to 150; still he continued to extend hospitality to every class in the neighbourhood. Sixty gallons of milk, and one hundred of beer, were daily distributed amongst the peasantry. Sharon Turner's enmity relaxes for a moment when he contemplates the fallen minister's

conduct at this period. "It was" (he says) "gratifying to the inhabitants of the country to have their Prelate among them; his house was soon frequented by a great resort of the most worshipful gentlemen of the district. He entertained them with the best cheer he could devise, and his gentle and familiar behaviour caused him to be greatly beloved and esteemed throughout the whole country. He felt the value of those softening qualities and manners which peculiarly constitute the moral beauty of virtue. Others are more sublime and distinguishing; but the kind and courteous voice, the benign amenity, the benevolent feelings, and the unassuming conduct, never fail to awake our sweetest and most endearing sympathies, to connect heart with heart, and soul with soul, in bonds of mutual gratification and genial regard, and to attest that interior loveliness of character which attracts the esteem of intellect and sensibility, with a social magnetism that every age and rank feel and welcome." His endowments at Oxford and Ipswich attest his love of learning, he gave some 3000*l.* a year in gratuities to men of learning at home and abroad. "Whoever," says Erasmus, "was distinguished by any art or science paid court to the Cardinal, and none paid court in vain."

Wolsey wished to reform the abuses of pluralities and non-residents. But he did not himself act upon the wish, because his position forbade it. He held a large number of rich livings: he possessed the lucrative Deanery of Lincoln, was permitted "through royal favour" to unite with York the See of Durham and Winchester, as well as Worcester, Bath and Wells. Some of those bishoprics were "nominally filled by foreigners," with whom Wolsey compounded for the offices; it was

impossible for him to attend to those ecclesiastical duties, and neglected they were too frequently. The clergy throughout his episcopal jurisdiction did not perform their duties ; sermons were few ; but still, whenever the Cardinal became aware of this state of things he punished the delinquent by suspension. He sometimes "entered a church in a remote district, unknown," and after a while said, "I am your Bishop, have you any complaint to make against my priests?" He was rigid with regard to the moral character of his clergy, and set "spies on the rural priests to ascertain how they spent their time." Again, though guilty of the sin of "plurality," Wolsey always impressed on his clergy the "necessity of sermons and careful instruction to be given to the peasant class on the 'Articles of Faith.'" In some districts the people were well instructed in the Catholic Faith, the result of which was that they were moral, temperate, and obedient to the laws. For this happy condition they were very largely indebted to the co-operation of the monks and nuns. If Wolsey had studied the duties of a prelate and not those of a politician, he was well qualified to govern a diocese, for his discerning glance could at once detect the difference between a simulation of zeal and the reality of piety. He detested hypocrisy, often remarking, "You cannot deceive me, sir ; I know an honest man from a knave by his very look." Under all the circumstances, no pluralist or non-resident ever governed a body of clergy with a greater effort of regard to the interest of religion than did the Cardinal of York. His strict discipline was tempered with kindness, and the admission of an error gave him reason to hope for amendment.

The Church of England at the present day retains the administrative abuses of the Catholic Church, whilst it ignores or scarcely adopts any of the good practices of its predecessor. The appointment of Wolsey to the office of parish priest was regarded by the friends of true religion as a violation of equity, although Longland states that, "without any clerical experience, he became a good guardian to the cure." In the vast number of appointments by lay patrons in the Anglican Church at present, it is inevitable that the acknowledgment of Longland cannot, in too many cases, be deserved. The lot of a village pastor, however, had no charms for Wolsey at the age of thirty, and his aspiring genius concentrated itself on the realization of those "golden dreams," whose fulfilment through the patronage of the King some time after attracted the gaze of the world. Whether as a village pastor, or the Lord High Chancellor of England and Cardinal of York, he still retained a respect for the head of the Catholic Church; but the political position of both parties occasionally placed them in antagonism. Here is a proof of the homage and respect tendered by Henry and Wolsey to the Pontiff in 1527, when the King and his minister commanded the esteem of Christendom. During Clement's political embarrassments he wrote to Wolsey, declaring that his "only hope and comfort lay in the Cardinal's influence with his Sovereign, and the piety and devotion of the English King to the Church." Wolsey addresses "an earnest note" to the King, calling on him "as defender of the Faith" to "uphold the Pope, and that God shall help him in return." The King replied that "he could not interfere." "I more lament this evil chance" (wrote Henry) "than my tongue can tell. . .

. . . But if my treasure may help him, take that which to you seemeth most convenient." The position of the King was a delicate one, when his Holiness and the Emperor (the King's uncle) were at variance on temporal matters.

The moral character of Wolsey has been questioned; yet no case has been established against him. As the reader is aware, his enemies were numerous—both lay and clerical; even Cavendish, his gentleman usher, draws a painful picture of his conduct when Dean of Lincoln and almoner to the young King (Henry). "It was not," he says, "that of a conscientious and virtuous priest." But Cavendish was in no way connected with him when Dean of Lincoln. It would be unjust to credit the gossiping stories of the times, many of which can be traced to political enemies. Langley and Lee, both friars, seem to have been retained to slander Wolsey's moral character. He is described by others as "placed in the stocks by a country justice for getting drunk at a fair with some yeomen, when a parish priest." Lord Campbell, in his "English Chancellors," reproduces this tale, which is one of pure invention. Wolsey never descended to the society of the vulgar; and whilst other clerics partook of the yeomen's hospitality, he dined alone, and retired to his books, "which," says Stephen Gardiner, "he told me were the best company he could find in a country town or village." The Countess of Richmond and Bishops Fisher and Foxe joined in recommending him to the notice of the King, who was at once "charmed by the modesty of his bearing, his varied intelligence, and learning." When Stephen Gardiner filled the office of Latin secretary to the Cardinal, in reply to some charges against his master he said, "A man who fills

so high a position in the state is surrounded by persons who are seeking favours, the tenth of which he cannot possibly grant; therefore, his professing friends become bitter enemies, and care not what falsehood their ugly tongue doth pronounce." Mr. Froude does not credit the charges made against the character of Wolsey, where those charges do not interfere with the renown of his own hero, Henry. And Dean Hook observes that, "although we hear of an alleged son of Wolsey, he was nevertheless a moral man." Winter, his reputed son, was merely a god-child, his father being one of Dean Wolsey's gardeners. There were four men named Winter in his domestic employment, and he became god-father to two of their children; one of them was subsequently educated for the priesthood and held a cure in Suffolk. At another time there were three clergymen in Oxfordshire who received their education under similar circumstances. There were 800 persons in his employment, the great majority of whom were married—married at their master's request. He was constantly importuned to become god-father for the child of some favourite domestic, on one of which occasions he remarked to Gardiner, "I will shortly have as many god-children as the king's mother." Wolsey was twenty-nine years of age when ordained a priest, and after a laborious research into the incidents of his early life we can find no real justification of the charges against his moral character. He was a fine horseman, and delighted in the rural sports of his countrymen, yet enjoyed those sports with moderation. We have investigated the names of three alleged "mistresses" of the Cardinal. One happens, however, to be a certain Dame Longland, "the favourite"

of Dr. Francis, his physician ; the next was Blanche Rivers, the "head gardener's housekeeper;" and the third was connected with Robert Cromwell, brother to Lord Cromwell, who was in the Cardinal's employment in 1527. There is no proof Wolsey knew of these things. It is asserted that he had "several daughters." Not a shade of evidence for the statement. The truth would seem to be that Wolsey was the father of a daughter, about the period of his twentieth year, of which incident we have but scanty particulars. It appears that there resided in those times, in the vicinity of Ipswich, a "poor gentleman" of ancient family, named Walter Fitzherbert, who had a daughter of exquisite loveliness, named Blanche. At sixteen years of age she became acquainted with "Maister Wolcey," then in the spring of a noble manhood. The father of Blanche soon discovered that a passionate feeling of love existed between the young people: he remonstrated with Wolsey on the fact that both parties were poor; but his wise counsel was ignored. A clandestine marriage followed; and the result was the death of Blanche in child-birth. This incident decided the future position of Wolsey, and abandoning his intention of becoming a lawyer, he resolved to become a Churchman. Mary Wolsey, the offspring of this marriage, was educated at Godstow, where she subsequently died in her sixteenth year, and long before her father rose to ecclesiastical honours. This is all the foundation that can justly be produced of Wolsey being a parent⁶.

It may, however, be contended that Queen Katherine

⁶ MS. Journal of Theresa Varney, of Godstow. Letter of Catherine Bulkeley. Diary of Fildebert Fitzherbert, of Ipswich, A.D. 1486. The above interesting papers are now in the possession of an old English resident of Tours.

told the Cardinal to "his face that he was an immoral man and a deceiver." But the Queen only repeated the scandal circulated by others, and that, too, at a moment of much excitement, when smarting under the injustice and wrong he aided in inflicting upon her. To sum up—Wolsey's contemporaries and subsequent writers have impeached his moral character; but all have signally failed in justifying their accusations.

Giustiniani, who was no friend or admirer of Wolsey, has left his opinion on record of the Cardinal's merits as a judge. "He is," observes that accomplished diplomatist, "pensive, and has the reputation of being extremely just; he favours the people exceedingly—especially the poor, hearing their wants and seeking to despatch them instantly. He also makes the lawyers plead gratis for all paupers." "In matters of judicature," writes Fuller, "he behaved himself commendably." No widows' sighs, nor orphans' tears, appear in our chronicles as caused by the Cardinal of York. Some English writers—amongst them the author of "The Chancellors"—allege that Wolsey "neglected his duties as Chancellor; that his decisions were whimsical, arbitrary, and in ignorance of law;" that "he had no pity for the poor suitor." That able and discriminating prelate, Edward Fox, Bishop of Hereford, who was long acquainted with the Cardinal, declares that he had never known so painstaking a judge; that he was always on the side of the poor man when opposed by the rich or unscrupulous;" and that "when he decided against the claims of a poor man, or of a widow or orphans, he invariably gave them assistance in money or employment." Who can question the testimony of Sir Thomas More, who, like Dr. Fox, speaks of Wolsey

from personal knowledge? "No Chancellor of England," writes this virtuous judge, "ever acted with greater impartiality, deeper penetration of judgment, or a more enlarged knowledge of law and of equity." It seems strange that Lord Campbell, who reverences and extols the character of More, should have passed over that good man's evidence as to the merits of his predecessor in the great seal.

Sharon Turner, who seems filled with all the bitterness of a Puritan towards the Cardinal, gives the following fanciful summary of Wolsey's qualities: "His ascendancy was distinguished; it was like the atoms of the soiling charcoal that we little value becoming by wise combinations and gradual arrangements, the resplendent diamond which every eye admires." Far more valuable, from its source, and for its honest expression, is the verdict of the Rev. Mr. Blunt: "Ambition leaves an odious mark upon history only when it has been accompanied by wrong and bloodshed; but not a single public act of this great man can be proved to have been unjust, while the gentleness and humanity of his government are conspicuous almost beyond belief when a sifting contrast comes to be drawn between it and that of his contemporaries or successors." Dr. Brewer traces the slanders on Wolsey's reputation to Polydore Vergil. "My only surprise," he says, "is that every historian in succession should have accepted Polydore Vergil's statements as a true picture of the Cardinal of York. Each has added a little to the original story or caricature. Hall took his portrait from Polydore; Fox from Hall; Burnett and Strype from Fox; Hume from Burnett, and so on to the end of the series." Although Hume

quotes Polydore Vergil, he has still the candour to inform his readers that "Polydore's narratives of Wolsey are very suspicious." The statements of Polydore Vergil are the more disgraceful to him from the fact that he was the best informed man of his time in European politics, and in his knowledge of statesmen and kings; but it must be added that he was malignant and unscrupulous in defaming the character of any one who refused him a favour, or thwarted his intriguing policy. As the reader is aware, Polydore Vergil was collector of the Popes "annates" in England, and also held the office of Archdeacon of Wells and a prebendary in Hertford. He lived nearly forty years in this country, where he amassed much property. Like Erasmus, Polydore Vergil wrote some sadly sycophantic "dedications" to Henry VIII. Here is a specimen: "You surpass the glory of all the princes who now exist." This was written in 1532, when Henry had begun his warfare against the Papacy; yet Vergil, though thus writing, sustained the Pope's policy. Yet a man who flatters from selfishness will be as ready to utter depreciatory falsehoods from spite, disappointment, or a mean desire to obtain favour with the enemies of overthrown greatness. Such were Vergil's motives for his malignant assaults on Wolsey.

It seems to be the fate of most public men to be misrepresented to posterity. Many allegations have been made as to the envy and jealousy of Wolsey towards some of his eminent contemporaries. The fact is, the Cardinal might have said with Petrarch, "Of all vices envy is the last of which I could be guilty." After strict research we have been unable to find those assertions against Wolsey sustained by any honourable

or trustworthy proofs. No great soul ever envies in any man the possession of genius or virtue.

We now approach the closing scene in the great minister's career. The Cardinal's health had been declining for some time; he was labouring under dropsy, a weakness of the limbs, and a general prostration; but the vigour of his mind was still unimpaired. He was not, however, in a condition to travel "with expedition in the cold, wet November days."

More than three thousand persons assembled at Cawood to see him a prisoner; not as in London to exult, but to "pity and to bless him for all the good offices he rendered them." His spirits were quite fallen; yet he seemed soothed by the good nature of the people—the men, the women, and the children. "They cried all with a loud voice" (says Cavendish), "'God save your Grace! The foul evil take them that hath taken you from us; and we pray heaven, that a very vengeance may light upon them all.'" Thus they ran crying after him through the town of Cawood, they loved him so well. Such is the description of the scene by an eyewitness. When Wolsey reached Sheffield Park, his health felt a change for the worse. On the following morning at an early hour Cavendish found him seated on a chest with his beads in his hands. The news of Kingston's arrival from London made him tremble; he had a foreboding of the errand on which the constable of the Tower came. He "cried, took his beads, looked at them for a minute, laid them down again, and then exclaimed in a mournful accent, 'Well, as God willeth, so be it. I am ready to accept such ordinances as God hath provided for me.'" Shortly after a painful scene occurred on the entrance

of Kingston. The Cardinal now saw that the bridge was cut away, and his enemies on the march to his destruction. As far as Kingston was concerned no gaoler could perform his unwelcome office with more delicacy and consideration. "Maister Kingston," said Wolsey, "my disease is such that I cannot live; I have a flux with a continual fever; and if ye see no alteration in me soon, there is no remedy but death."

The "Court party became impatient at the time consumed in conveying the object of their hatred to London," and as soon as he was able to get on horseback he was compelled to proceed. Along the road the yeomen and peasantry came forth to meet him, expressing their sympathy in pathetic language. The harsh cold days did not prevent the wives and daughters from appearing on the highways, to "wave their hands and give looks of sympathy." To all he bowed, saying, "May God preserve ye in His holy religion, my good people." He did not proceed far until his strength began rapidly to decline. Arriving at the Abbey of Leicester on Saturday evening, he was met by the Abbot and the brotherhood, when he exclaimed, in the accents of a broken heart, "Father Abbot, I am come to lay my bones amongst you." He was immediately carried to bed, from which he never rose again. On Sunday he "seemed to be fast sinking," but he rallied. His beads were constantly in his hands; he prayed with great fervour, making the sign of the cross several times. It was discovered by an attendant that he "wore a hair shirt, which he evidently wished to conceal." He described himself as a "most lowly creature, a wretched sinner." He spoke of his firm belief and adherence to the "Latin Church, in which he said

a sinner received more comfort than in any other." It is difficult to understand what could have induced Turner to misinterpret the Christian close of Wolsey's life as the "ravings of superstition," or the "vain hypocrisy of being well thought of after death." Passing by the inutility to a dead man of the world's good or bad opinion, if the great Cardinal were impelled by so incredible a motive, he could only hope to attain the good will of the poor, for nearly all the lords and great men of the kingdom had taken up arms against religion.

The last days were now approaching. Sunday and Monday passed in suffering and resignation. On the latter day the Cardinal told his attendants that he would live till eight on the following morning, which proved prophetic. At the dawn of Tuesday morning (November 29, 1530), he made a declaration of his religious belief in the presence of the Abbot and six of the brotherhood, and then received the rites of the Church. In one hour later his last memorable address to Kingston was made. His voice now faltered, but his eyes still retained their intelligent brightness. A Carthusian confessor (John Longland), whom he had known for many years, stood beside the death-couch whilst mass proceeded at the great altar in the church; and just as the bell of the abbey tolled for the raising of the Host, the Cardinal of York closed his eyes upon all the fleeting honours and transitory splendours of state, as well as upon the deceit and wickedness of human avarice and ambition.

And now *in memoriam*. When the interests and the honour of England were concerned, this remarkable man was energetic and fearless; yet he waged no war

of blood or plunder—his wars were the contests of diplomacy, his triumphs the victories of intellectual supremacy. He played his part nobly, and displayed more magnanimity in his fall than at the zenith of his greatness. It is at length time that truth should be vindicated; that the ignorant or malignant narratives so often presented as biographies of Wolsey should be controverted; that the dust which has hitherto covered his tomb should be cleared away, and the real character elicited of a man who in ideas as well as actions was the grandest minister that England had ever seen.

The death of Wolsey made room for the promotion of two of the King's agents in the divorce controversy. Edward Lee was appointed to the See of York, and Stephen Gardiner to that of Winchester. Lee's conduct in relation to Queen Katherine was lamentably unbecoming. He seems to have been a man with whom the highest principles were made subservient to personal interest. Wood admits that Dr. Lee visited Rome on the "intricate divorce question;" but is silent as to his conduct to Queen Katherine. In speaking—perhaps of his latter days—he observes: "He was a great divine, and well versed in all kinds of learning, famous as well for his wisdom, virtue, and holiness of life, a continual preacher of the gospel, a man very liberal to the poor, and exceedingly beloved by all sorts of men, and greatly missed and bemoaned by the poor when dead." This picture is overdrawn; but the character furnished by Erasmus of Lee no one could credit, for that splenetic writer was "reckless in accusation of those who questioned or too nicely criticized his works." Whatever were the general

merits of Archbishop Lee, as a scholar and a theologian, he was undoubtedly competent to offer an opinion on the literary labours of Erasmus; and, it is to be hoped that, as Archbishop of York, he endeavoured to be worthy of his predecessors.

Stephen Gardiner, who ranks next to Wolsey and Pace in ability as a statesman, was the first who proclaimed the principle that the "Church should not be under the control of the Pope:" he would adhere to the doctrines of the Papal See, but the "King should become head of the Church." This new principle was received by a portion of the secular clergy and the spendthrift laity, who were not unmindful of how far it might promote the projected attack upon the Monastic Houses. It is of little consequence as to what were Gardiner's alleged "good intentions;" but in Henry's reign he did more to undermine and injure the Catholic Church than any amongst its avowed enemies. His conduct on the divorce question covers his name with shame and odium. In subsequent chapters the reader will see more of the policy and proceedings of Gardiner.

DEATH OF ARCHBISHOP WAREHAM.

THE death of Archbishop Wareham (1532) tended to promote the divorce question by the appointment of Dr. Cranmer to the See of Canterbury. As the reader is aware, Archbishop Wareham, both as a statesman and ecclesiastic, originally objected to the marriage of Henry and Katherine on canonical grounds; but the Countess of Richmond, the young King's grandmother, aided by the council, and the "solemn declaration" of Katherine to the Pontiff, set the legality of the matter at rest—for at least eighteen years. The

Calvinistic biographer of Wareham comments on the results of the marriage of Katherine and Henry : "Had Chancellor Wareham's opinion prevailed, England might have remained a Roman Catholic country ; but the Countess of Richmond took part with the majority of the council, and young Henry, not much inclined to this arrangement of convenience, thought he was bound to fulfil the promise given in his father's life-time, and the marriage took place which produced our boasted Reformation " (Lord Campbell's "English Chancellors," vol. i., p. 427).

Wareham filled the office of Chancellor under Henry VII. and his son ; and had been for many years the confidential adviser of the Tudor family. As a politician he upheld unequivocal subservience to the crown ; yet he admonished "both King, lords, and commons," on the duties they had each to perform ; that they should "be speakers of truth, not flatterers ; firm, not wavering ; and neither covetous nor ambitious." He told the "people to obey the law, to honour the King, and to practise their religion." To the soldier he said, "You must walk in the ways of God ; and in Him alone place your trust ; defend your country and your King ; obey your superiors ; be content with your pay ; have no plunder, nor do any thing that is cruel to an enemy." What would our linesman of the present day say to the Archbishop of Canterbury thus lecturing him on his duties to Church and State ?

When Wareham retired from the Chancellorship, to be succeeded by Wolsey, he seldom appeared in public life again ; his time was devoted to his duties as a prelate ; he preached many sermons against Luther ; and when the divorce question was first

raised, he sent an ably-written letter to the King on the subject; but his advice was now seldom asked by the Sovereign⁷. "He was an honest and faithful minister to my father" (said Henry); "he placed the crown on my head; he has his own eccentric views on every matter; he is now getting very old and feeble, but he is still sincere and just." Such was the opinion Henry expressed of Wareham to Longland, his confessor. He was known to be opposed to the supremacy of the Church claimed by Henry; but still countenanced the spiritual fantasies of the Maid of Kent; and although many of those who professed to believe in her idle prophecies, suffered on the scaffold, he was left unnoticed by the King. He was, however, at this time fast approaching the end of his days; his zeal for religion and the wants of the "poor and the unfortunate" became untiring. He invited political and personal enemies to his house, and "sent them away as friends, telling each to cultivate charity and kindly feeling, and to remember the widow and the orphan." A few days before his death Archbishop Wareham asked his steward "what money he had in the world," and was answered "thirty pounds," to which he exclaimed, "*Satis viatici in cælum.*" His property was scarcely sufficient to pay his current debts and the expense of his funeral. The prosecution of Empson and Dudley, the noted financial malefactors of the preceding reign, is the only charge of severity ever made against Wareham as a minister of the Crown. This prosecution, however, was instituted by the King's council and sustained by both Houses of Parliament. Wareham has left behind a high

⁷ This letter is said to be deposited at the Vatican.

reputation as a judge; he strictly watched over the administration of justice in all the minor courts, and "received the petitions of the poor suitors with his own hands." It was said by some of his learned contemporaries, that in his own court no Chancellor had ever evinced greater impartiality or deeper penetration of judgment, and that none of his predecessors who were ecclesiastics had equalled him in a knowledge of law and equity.

On his deathbed the Archbishop issued this protest against the proceedings of the King and his advisers:—

"In the name of God, Amen. We, William, by Divine Providence, Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England, Legate of the Apostolic See, hereby publicly and expressly do protest for ourselves, and for our holy metropolitan Church of Canterbury, that to any statute passed, or hereafter to be passed, in this present Parliament, begun on the 3rd day of November, 1529, and continued until this present time, in so far as such statute or statutes be in derogation of the Pope of Rome, or the Apostolic See, or be to the hurt, prejudice, or limitation of the powers of the said Church, or shall tend to the subverting, or enervating, derogatory from or diminishing the laws, customs, privileges, of the metropolitan Church of Canterbury; we neither will, nor intend, nor with clear conscience are we able to, consent to the same; but by these writings we do dissent from, refuse, and contradict them."

"I have," said he, "performed my duty to the King, to the realm, and to the Church of Christ; and now, full of hope, I am ready to appear before the Supreme Judge to account for my stewardship."

The following picture of Wareham has been drawn by the discerning pencil of Erasmus. It does nearly as much honour to the client as to the patron, who so generously favoured the brilliant foreign scholar. Wareham was a beautiful exemplification of the truth that a life of virtue may also be one of cheerful activity. Intolerant only of vice, Wareham treated all men with consideration, and, whilst self-mortified from conscientious motives, never obtruded austerity on others. Thus writes Erasmus:—

“I have the most tender recollection of a man worthy to be held in perpetual honour, William Wareham, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Primate of all England. He was a theologian in reality, as well as in title, and profoundly versed both in the civil and canon law. He early gained reputation by his skilful conduct of foreign embassies entrusted to him; and on account of his consummate prudence he was much beloved by Henry VII. Thus he rose to be Archbishop of Canterbury, the highest ecclesiastical dignity in the realm. Bearing this burden, itself very weighty, one heavier still was imposed upon him. He was forced to accept the office of Chancellor, which, among the English, is attended with regal splendour and power. As often as he goes into public, a crown and a sceptre are carried before him. He is the eye, the mouthpiece, and the right hand of the Sovereign, and the supreme judge of the whole English nation. For many years he executed the duties of this office so admirably that you would have supposed he was born with a genius for it, and that he devoted to it the whole of his time and thoughts. But all the while he was so constantly watchful and attentive

with respect to religion, and all that concerned his ecclesiastical functions, that you would have thought he had no secular cares. He found leisure for the strict performance of his private devotions; to celebrate mass almost daily; to hear prayers read several times a day; to decide causes in his court; to receive foreign ministers; to attend the King's council; to adjust disputes which arose amongst Churchmen; to give dinners to his friends, whom he often entertained in parties of two hundred; and, along with all this, for reading every learned publication which appeared. He proved himself sufficient for such a multiplicity of avocations by wasting no portion of his time or his spirits in field sports, or in gaming, or in idle pursuits. His only relaxation was pleasant reading, or discoursing with men of learning. Although he had bishops, dukes, and earls at his table, his dinners seldom lasted much above an hour. He appeared in splendid robes becoming his high station; yet his tastes were exceedingly simple. He scarcely suffered wine to touch his lips; and when beyond seventy years of age his usual drink was small beer, which he took very sparingly; but while he himself abstained from almost every thing at table, still so cheerful was his countenance and so festive his talk, that he enlivened and charmed all who were present. He was the same agreeable and rational companion at all hours. He made it a rule to abstain from supper; but if his friends were assembled at that meal, he would sit down along with them and promote their conviviality without partaking of any food himself. The hour generally devoted to supper he was accustomed to fill up with prayer or reading, or perhaps telling witty

stories, of which he had a large store; or freely exchanging jests with his friends; but never with ill nature or any breach of decorum. He spurned indecency and slander as one would a serpent. So this illustrious man made the day, the shortness of which many allege as a pretext for their idleness, long enough for all the various public and private duties he had to perform."

It should be added that Archbishop Wareham was one of the few Churchmen of his time who never neglected their clerical duties, nor dishonoured their sacred calling by giving too much attention to political interests.

"ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM."

GERARD, who subsequently styled himself Erasmus, was born in the year 1467. The inhabitants of his native city have honoured his memory in many forms—by medals, statues, and paintings. When at school at Dauter, Zuithus, a learned man of that place, said that the "time would come when that small boy would prove the wonder and envy of all Germany." At the same seminary he met his future patron, Adrian VI., and many others who became distinguished Churchmen and lawyers. One specialty was remarked of Erasmus, that he had a marvellous memory, being able to repeat by heart all Terence—his recitation of the "*Heautontimoroumenos*" (the "*Self-Tormentor*") of the former poet being most remarkable—and Horace. When only thirteen years of age he became an orphan, and his guardians, having taken possession of his small patrimony, placed him in a monastery, when he was

compelled, by "monition" and circumstances, to become a priest of the regular order. "I had no vocation for such an office" (he says), "but when I took orders I could not violate my vows, nor do any thing that could be discreditable to the clerical character." He did not long remain in the cloister. Laying aside the cowl, he repaired to Paris, where he renewed his studies, and cultivated the friendship of men of letters. He next visited Rome, and almost every university and city of importance in Europe, holding learned discussions with scholars and theologians.

But England was the country he most esteemed, and here he received a reception from Churchmen and laymen which showed how highly they then appreciated learning and the possessor of cultivated genius. In the King's palace and in the baron's castle he was honoured and flattered; bishops, abbots, and heads of colleges entertained him. Wolsey, Wareham, Richard Pace, Edward Foxe (Bishop of Hertford), Richard Foxe (Winchester), Fisher, Longland, Collet, More, and all the notable Churchmen, lawyers, and statesmen of England "held learned discourse with him." Oxford and Cambridge "threw open their doors to receive him." The great houses of Mountjoy, Derby, and Dorset sought his services as tutor to their sons, and he was likewise engaged as the Latin preceptor to Alexander, the natural son of the King of Scots. The French nobles offered him lucrative situations to instruct their children. But the English laity were more charmed than any other by his learning, wit, and urbanity of manner. He received large sums of money from prelates and nobles to whom he dedicated "various essays and papers." Archbishop Wareham was ever

mindful of his wants, which were supplied with a delicacy of management which reflects credit on that venerable prelate; but there were others who taunted him with being poor. "How is it," said a wealthy canon (Paul Rivers), "that you authors and poets are always needy and proud?" "I will answer you in a few days," said Erasmus, "panting with passion." The great satirist did answer the canon, and, in the words of a contemporary, "lashed him in several pieces most unmercifully." Amongst the dedications of Erasmus is one to Lord Wiltshire, the father of Anna Boleyn, entitled a "Prayer against a Sudden Death."

Erasmus has been considered "mercenary, indulging in a love of money." This statement is not altogether based upon facts; for, although he received large sums of money from his patrons, he liberally disbursed them to meet the wants of neglected genius. Scholars, poets, and painters were the recipients of his bounty. In the words of Edward Foxe, Bishop of Hertford, he relieved their "wants with a delicacy of thought which reflected honour upon the man."

Stillingfleet is of opinion that Erasmus did more to promote the Reformation in England than Luther or Zuinglius. This statement is not borne out by facts. Few in England were acquainted with the contradictory and eccentric principles of Erasmus, whose knowledge seemed to be applied to the purpose of finding fault with and satirizing the character of the religious orders—the cynical Juvenal of an almost unprincipled age. He advocated Luther one day and condemned him the next. "I am" (he says) "neither the accuser of Luther, nor his advocate, nor his judge." One of his biographers (Dr. Knight) contends that he "paved

the way to the English Reformation; but, possessing more learning than Luther, he had not the courage to do the work." In Henry's reign it was the wont of Erasmus to condemn the monastic houses; to describe the friars as "lazy and ignorant;" and at the same time to advocate all the tenets of the Latin Church, which he never formally denied. He won golden honours amongst English prelates who were zealous upholders of the Papacy. Archbishop Wareham offered him a living, but he refused, on the ground that he was still ignorant of the English language, and could not preach to the people in their native tongue. The Archbishop then told him that he should receive £20 per annum from the income of the living. This he rejected, stating that he did no work for it; but Wareham told him that he did "earn the money," for in his writings he taught the priests the constant necessity of preaching. If at this time Erasmus was "paving the way for the Reformation," he would not have been patronized by such prelates as Wareham or Fisher; nor would he, to judge by subsequent rules, have been a fitting cleric of the "new learning."

Erasmus has been long a favourite with many Protestant writers; yet they do not hold his opinions on some important dogmas, and others insinuate that he was a kind of freethinker. "It must be owned," writes an Anglican divine, "that there are in the writings of Erasmus some things that probably will not go down with the squeamish reader—things that must offend a Papist, and not altogether please a Protestant. He was, no doubt, in a modest sense of the word, a freethinker, and would call no man master, but judge for himself. A noble vein of free-

dom runs through all his works⁸." This description certainly suits the manner of man who would have favoured those sentiments of individualism which form the essentials of Protestantism. But though Erasmus was a cynic, proud in his scholarship, and a satirist of what he conceived to be, and were, in many instances, the imperfections of a system which time, and the declension of some of its ministers, had temporarily blemished, the acute and self-conscious Dutch philologist never dreamed of founding or joining an antagonistic cultus.

Erasmus, from giving way so much, according to the fashion of the age among scholars, to the hair-splitting of logical disputation, became a stranger to candour. He "loved deceit, and those whom he praised in public he censured or ridiculed in private." Yet he felt and expressed a veneration and love for the character of Archbishop Wareham. No scholar or wit of his time was a greater favourite with kings, cardinals, and statesmen than Erasmus. He corresponded with Francis I. and with Katherine of Arragon, who congratulated him on his Latin book on "Free Will." In her letter Katherine says, "I thank you that being so great a man, and discoursing on so great a subject, you should have so governed yourself, and treated it with so much modesty." Henry VIII. stated that the part of this same work which most attracted his attention was that wherein the author warned Christians against "an immoderate scrutiny into the secrets of the Divine Government." Erasmus was an especial favourite of Leo X., who, in July, 1515, wrote a "commendatory letter" to Henry VIII. on his behalf. "We have often found" (wrote Leo) "that those persons

⁸ Introduction to Dr. Knight's Life of Erasmus, p. xxv., 1726.

who have pursued the best arts and letters have the least of evil, and are endowed with the steadiest faith; and we know that great assistance and ornament have accrued to the Christian republic from knowledge, and from the eloquence of the learned. Induced by these motives we loved our esteemed son Erasmus of Rotterdam, whom we consider to be among the first in knowledge and the arts. He was indeed known to us in friendly intercourse when we were in a lower condition; but was not only then known, but warmly applauded by us, from those monuments of genius which he has committed to writing."

"Burnett gives Erasmus the character of a great canonist, an able statesman, and the friend of learned men." Another writer presents him to posterity as "the most facetious man of his age, and the most judicious critic, which are talents that as seldom meet together in the same person, as pedantry and good manners. . . . Perhaps no man has given the world a greater number of useful works than Erasmus; every thing that came from him instructs and pleases, and may as easily be known by the masterly strokes as his friend Hans Holbein's pieces by the boldness of the paint and the freshness of the colours." Although Erasmus was the author of a large number of works, many more have been published in Germany under his name, which drew their inspiration from other and less gifted sources. Bishop Bedel remarks that his "writings have crept into other men's works, and they have plumed themselves up in his feathers."

Erasmus died in his seventy-first year, on the 12th of July, 1536. Some writers contend that he died "an earnest Protestant; putting up no addresses to the

Virgin, or saints, or angels." Others give his last words as "Mercy, sweet Jesus. How long? Jesus, Fountain of Mercy, have mercy upon me." And again, "He was visited many times by an Augustinian father, who gave him comfort, and from whom he received the last rites of the Latin Church." The latter statements are the more credible. His jests upon transubstantiation, but a few months before his death, would seem to prove that he was not in communion with the Catholic Church; yet he wished the world to suppose that he belonged to it still, and was the great "reformer of the clergy." He wished not to be styled an apostate; and from being accounted a Protestant of the Lutheran or Melancthon school he shrank scornfully. The biographer of Dean Collet remarks, "that in all the forms of devotion composed by Erasmus there are but two prayers of invocation—to the Virgin Mary—and they were made by him when very young, and he confesses in effect, that it was rather his fancy to please a lady than his own judgment that caused him to write the prayers alluded to⁹." The inference Dr. Knight wishes to draw from the above passage is, that Erasmus was a hidden Protestant at the period indicated; but the deduction is about as probable as that the Lollards were Puritans or Anabaptists sixty years before Luther or Zuinglius were born.

The will of Erasmus is said not to be in form that of a Catholic; and those to whom he made legacies became Reformers at a subsequent period. Paul Valsius, to whom he left one hundred florins, was a professedly zealous Catholic, but afterwards became a

⁹ Dr. Knight's *Life of Dean Collet*, p. 147, A.D. 1724.

Calvinistic preacher. He left a bequest for the relief of those who were reduced to poverty through sickness or old age; to young maidens who were destitute of home or friends; and to "hopeful, but poor scholars, to enable them to pursue their studies."

These latter bequests did credit to the humanity of Erasmus; but any man, from Peter the Hermit to the merest indifferentist, might have made similar dispositions. In the pride of his own self-satisfied genius, Erasmus enacted the part of a free lance who tilted at all men and systems; but he differed far more from the professions of the German and English Reformers than he did from the doctrines of Rome. If the arrogance of intellectual vanity led him to satirize the religious orders, conscience and consistency rendered impossible the adoption of a new creed. With him religion was more of the head than of the heart, and learning the mistress rather than the handmaid of his faith. St. Ignatius observed that he never read his works without a sensation of spiritual dryness in his soul; and, subsequently, when General of the Jesuits, forbade the perusal of his books.

ARCHBISHOP CRANMER PRONOUNCES THE DIVORCE.

THE recent appointments to the Sees of York and Canterbury of two prelates who were known to be the unquestioning partizans of the court, aided by other bishops of a higher clerical reputation, gave the King an opportunity of removing the mask which slightly concealed his designs. A new scene was now to be opened, in which something very like falsehood and blasphemy were to give a legal and virtuous appearance

to one of the most discreditable proceedings in which a husband and wife could appear as litigants before a public tribunal.

The end of the love correspondence, and of the litigation, protracted for nearly six years, was the pronouncement of the divorce by Archbishop Cranmer, and the alleged marriage of Henry and Anna, all whose scruples vanished before a title bestowed by even the weakest legality. Sooth to say, a decree of Cranmer or a parliamentary statute secured more obedience from her than the ordinance of Heaven. This estimate of Anna Boleyn's integrity is founded on unquestionable grounds. Fuller, whose sources of information are even more undoubted than his acknowledged honesty, viewed it in this light. "Anna Boleyn," remarked this Protestant historian, "had the cunning chastity to refuse to share Henry's bed but as his *lawful wife*." Now, as before intimated, as she had a lover who seldom brooked delay, it seems improbable she would be permitted to await the "law's decree," for we find Archbishop Cranmer announcing the fact that "Mistress Anna Boleyn was big with child when his Highness our blessed King was pleased to marry her." Archbishop Cranmer ought to be a good authority on this subject, yet Burnett denies the above statement, alleging that "*soon after* Anna was married she was with child, which leaves no doubt of her previous chastity." Hume gives an artful version of Burnett's words. He says, "The Queen becoming pregnant so soon after the marriage, it was regarded by the 'people' as a strong proof of her modesty and virtue" (vol. iii. p. 174). But the dates of the marriage involve a contradiction: the periods differ,

and from the clandestine nature of the ceremony, it is probable the date was fixed to suit "circumstances." The marriage was not performed by Cranmer, who merely stated that he had "heard of such a ceremony taking place, but was unacquainted with the period of its celebration." The ceremony is said to have been performed by an obscure priest named Lee, who was rewarded with the bishopric of Lichfield for his disregard of canon law. As far as assertion can sustain a cause Burnett defends his heroine. He again contends that the impeachment of Anna's character has had its origin with Sanders; but he must have known that some six and thirty years before Sanders had written on the subject such accusations were made on the authority of very credible testimony (Le Grand, ii. 110; Stowe, p. 543). The Duke of Norfolk and Anna's father, it is alleged, were the only men present at the marriage. The former was privy to many a scandal on the part of his royal master; the other (Lord Wiltshire) was a pliant tool of Henry's caprice—a man devoid of principle or shame, one whom all the latest authorities which condescend to mention him concur in designating as the condoner of his personal dishonour, the participant of his wife's infamy. Lord Herbert states that Archbishop Cranmer was present; also Anna's brother and her stepmother Lady Wiltshire (Herbert's "*Life of Henry VIII.*," pp. 340, 341). If Cranmer was present, why did an inferior priest perform the ceremony? Was his Grace of Canterbury ashamed of the "condition" of the bride and the clandestine scene before "light in the morning"? Or did the marriage take place *before* or *after* the Archbishop had pronounced the divorce between Henry and Katherine?

Or had his Grace any scruples as to whether he should perform the ceremony or not? These are questions that have not yet been answered from any trustworthy source. So that the date of Henry's positive marriage is now just as much a mystery as the actual commencement of the intercourse.

During the controversy on the divorce a petition was presented to the Pope from a number of peers, prelates, and commoners, praying for an annulment of Katherine's marriage. This petition, it is alleged, was signed by Archbishop Wareham, Wolsey, and four other prelates, two dukes, two marquises, thirteen earls, and twenty-eight barons, twenty-two abbots (Rymer; also Herbert). Many of the signatures were forgeries. That of Wareham and six of the abbots were affixed to it without their consent, and the King knew *that* Archbishop of Canterbury's opinions on the divorce question to be unchangeable. The Pope was no stranger to the various artifices used to promote the divorce. He was courteous to all parties, but delayed the expression of any opinion. Many of the letters and other records bearing on the divorce were destroyed by a fire which occurred in the British Museum many years ago, thus unavoidably leaving the history of the event in a fragmentary condition. The Protestant historians that have dwelt most on this subject must have felt the weakness of the claim this marriage had to legality and fairness when they had recourse to such arguments as Sharon Turner has used.

He states that "it is not quite clear whether the King had a private divorce from Katherine before he wedded Anna." He then cites several authorities to sustain this view; but none of his witnesses are able

to testify by whom the private divorce was granted. Cranmer could not have done so as a prelate in January or February, for he was not consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury until the 30th of March; but, supposing he was Archbishop in February, and privately granted the divorce, on what authority could he pronounce such a decree? He was then the spiritual agent of the Pope, and as such could not; although four months later, when pronouncing the divorce at Dunstable, he had the hardihood to style himself the "Apostolic Legate," &c., giving judgment in opposition to the will and sentiments of the Pontiff. In another passage Turner states that the "Pope was the only authority on earth that princes and subjects had to resort to for the determination of such questions." Then, of what effect could be a "private divorce" pronounced by some person unnamed? In fact, Mr. Turner's argument is an acknowledgment that the marriage took place before the decree of divorce was pronounced.

The King and his new Archbishop of Canterbury having made the "final arrangements" on Saturday, the 10th of May, 1533, Archbishop Cranmer opened his court at Dunstable for the "final adjudication of the divorce question." On this occasion he was assisted by Bonner and Gardiner. They sat thirteen days in deliberation, with a staff of ecclesiastical and civil lawyers, to give the business an air of legality. Queen Katherine, still protesting against the "lawfulness of their proceedings, made no appearance;" on the 23rd of the same month Cranmer, as Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England, and still styling himself Legate of the Apostolic See, gave judgment that "the

Lady Katherine of Arragon was *not* the lawful wife of King Henry, nor never had been such, nor never could have been such." To add greater solemnity to the decree, the Archbishop "invoked the Holy Trinity and the whole Court of Heaven to attest the truth and justice of his proceedings." Bonner and Gardiner were present on the occasion, and they both assented to a judgment in the equity of which they still less believed than did Archbishop Cranmer himself.

The Rev. Mr. Blunt has very little faith in the integrity or honesty of these proceedings. "In looking," he writes, "at the steps which were then taken by Cranmer, it is impossible to exonerate him from collusion with the King." And again: "There seems to have been a thorough understanding between Henry and Cranmer as to the character of the 'process' which the Archbishop was thus to smuggle through its rapid stages" (p. 187).

Assuming for a moment that Cranmer's judgment was legal, no marriage could be valid until he pronounced his decree at Dunstable Abbey. The decree was given on the 23rd, and on the 31st Anna Boleyn was presented to the people of London as the "new Queen;" she could not be styled the King's wife if she were not married at some time between the 23rd and 31st. Now, there is no record, nor even the slightest clue to a marriage between Henry and Anna at the time above indicated. Therefore the clandestine rite was gone through *before*, and not *after*, Cranmer's judgment at Dunstable. Hume, who approaches the subject with evident reluctance, states that the judgment of Cranmer "ought *naturally* to have preceded the marriage;" and then he makes the strange acknow-

ledgment: "By a subsequent decree Cranmer ratified the marriage of Henry and Anna Boleyn¹." That is, Cranmer ratified a marriage which is supposed to have taken place four months before it could have been legal. We have, later still, the researches of Mr. Froude, who, speaking of the "new Queen's presentation to the people," observes: "Those who had approved of what had been done were scandalized at the presentation to them, at the instant of the divorce, of a new Queen four months advanced in pregnancy." Elizabeth was born on the 8th September, so her mother must have been six months pregnant at the time of her "presentation." Thus the English people were presented with a king's wife and a proximate heir to their loyalty at one and the same time. The fact is, the more this strange passage in English history is examined, the less satisfied can the investigators be of the honour, equity, and morality of all who took part in those events.

Those who venerate Cranmer for the part taken by him in the formation of the Prayer Book or the Liturgy of the Established Church, have been energetic in defending his conduct in this divorce question. They have ransacked records and history for some Catholic precedent, but without effect. Sharon Turner goes back to Archbishop Odo, in the case of Edwin and Elgiva, to produce a parallel, but he fails in establishing any analogy between the two cases.

¹ The "ratification" of the clandestine marriage was given by Cranmer four days after the divorce. It took place at Lambeth Palace, and occupied but a "few minutes."

TRIUMPH OF ANNA BOLEYN.

WHILST the judicial proceeding was being enacted in the village of Dnnstable, preparations were making in London for the "Coronation of the new Queen." On the 19th of May, four days before the judgment, Anna Boleyn "came by water" from Greenwich to the Tower. The river Thames was studded with "boats of all sizes and the most fantastic decorations; the Lord Mayor, the Corporation, the nobles, the knights, and the esquires, were seated in their stately barges, with golden banners waving in the gentle May-day breeze;" the motley crowds of sightseers lined the shore and every available spot. Anna Boleyn was seated in a gilded barge, preceded at a short distance by the Lord Mayor. Just before the barge went a "foyst or wafter," full of ordnance, in which was a dragon continually moving and casting wild fire; round the foyst stood "some terrible monsters in appearance, and wild men casting up fire of various colours, and producing a strange noise." The cannon at the Tower "kept up a brisk roar;" the ships in the river (and they were not then few) were decorated, and had fireworks on board; trumpeters were placed in the respective barges, who every five minutes sent forth a flourish, which was received with acclamations. In this order of "Venetian procession" the new Queen reached the archway of the Tower, where the King, surrounded by a magnificent retinue, received her on the stairs—to use the words of a spectator—"as if she were some great enchantress from a fairy world, whose loveliness had charmed and devoured all hearts." One question presented itself at

this eventful moment to the steady and mature judgment of the wealthy and virtuous citizens: "Where, or when, was the new Queen married? the divorce between the King and the good Queen Katherine is only a few days granted by Archbishop Cranmer, yet her Highness, the new Queen, looks to be far gone with child?"

After residing a few days at the Tower, Queen Anna paid the "accustomed visit to the City" before her coronation. On the 31st of May, the City of London presented a scene of wealth and magnificence which amazed the foreign spectators. The houses in Cornhill and Gracechurch Street were decorated in front with scarlet and crimson in arras and tapestry. Cheapside was draped in cloth of gold, tissue, and velvet. The Sheriffs of London and the Corporation rode on horseback in rich trappings; the windows were filled with youth and beauty; the footpaths were railed off the line of procession, to enable the people, the apprentices, and the guilds, to behold their Queen. A fresh discharge of cannon from the Tower, and a renewed flourish of trumpets announced to the anxious crowds that the observed of all observers was now approaching. Amongst the diplomatic representatives then in England, those only of Venice and France took part in the proceedings of the day. The French Ambassador's train formed the van in the procession. First came twelve French knights in surcoats of blue velvet, with sleeves of yellow silk, their horses trapped in blue, with white crosses powdered on the hangings; then a large number of English gentlemen, riding two-and-two; the Knights of the Bath in gowns of violet; some Lord Abbots of England appeared there, wearing

mitres glittering with diamonds, and gorgeous robes, and were an object of general attraction, inviting subsequent confiscation; the barons were attired in crimson velvet, riding two-and-two; the bishops and their attendants in their usual stately style; dukes, marquises, and other notables, rode two-and-two; trumpeters preceded each order of persons; Thomas Audley, Lord Chancellor of England, rode alone—solemn, reserved, and unnoticed; the Venetian Ambassador, and his quaint-looking train, elicited much remark, and excited the mirth of the multitude; the Archbishop of York, whose presence only called up the memory of Wolsey's regal splendour in that office, passed along; next approached the notable prelate who laboured so long and so earnestly to promote the object of that day's pageant—Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury—who looked far more pleased and satisfied with the scene before him than did the Church dignitaries who accompanied him, bearing crosses, &c. His reception from the populace was chilling—unpopular as he ever was with the masses. The Lord Mayor of London, the Knights of the Garter, Charles Duke of Suffolk, and other courtiers, followed. A fresh flourish of trumpets announced the approach of her Highness, Queen Anna. She was seated in a white chariot led by two palfreys in white damask which swept the ground; a golden canopy borne above it, “making music with its sweet little silver bells.” “The Queen,” says a contemporary, “smiled like an angel; she was dressed in white tissue robes, her rich fair hair flowing loosely over her shoulders; her temples circled with a coronet of gold and diamonds; she looked the loveliest of beings at this exciting moment.” Whilst the giddy

crowd revelled in a wild and unnatural enthusiasm, the past seemed to have been forgotten. Was there no recollection of Campeggio's procession, and the "virtuous indignation" for the wrongs of the Royal Castilian lady who was at that moment in a distant village of England, broken-hearted and weary of life? Principle, charity, honour, and chivalry seemed forgotten on that memorable 31st of May.

In Fenchurch Street the "new Queen" was met by some two thousand children dressed in fantastic costumes, who gave her a strident welcome. Many quaint exhibitions were presented to her notice; lutes, harps, ballads, and singing, were sedulous in her praise; in Leadenhall Street appeared a "little mountain," which was hung with red and white roses; a gold ring was placed on the summit, on which, as Queen Anna appeared, a white falcon was made to "descend as out of the sky," and then came down an angel with sweet melody, and set a close crown of gold upon the falcon's head; and in the same pageant "sat St. Anne, with her issue beneath her;" and Mary Cleophas with her four children, one of whom made a "goodly oration" to the Queen on the merits of St. Anne. The "fountains and conduits ran wine all day long, the apprentices and common people making merrie; church bells rang forth merrie peals, music was at every corner, children awaited her approach with little songs of welcome," and ladies, with graceful garlands, offered their homage to the rising sun; the populace seemed to vie with each other in their welcome, as it has been styled, to a Queen Consort, who was about to be crowned in St. Edward's chair under circumstances the most unprecedented in the history of England's sovereignty.

Henry was not present at this pageant, having declared that his "sweet darling was to be the undisputed object of homage and of love for that day."

On the following day (Whit Sunday, June 1st), the Queen was crowned in Westminster Abbey, with all the solemnity and splendour usual to those times. The bishops, the abbots, the monks, the secular and regular clergy were there, but it was evident that the whole affair seemed somewhat compulsory. The Queen, amidst a flourish of trumpets, entered the Abbey, the Duchess of Norfolk holding her train; and, in episcopal dress, Bonner and Gardiner, as Bishops of London and Winchester, were "on either side of her Highness bearing up the lappets of her robe." She was arrayed in a robe of purple velvet, "furred with ermine, and a wreath of diamonds circling her brows, her hair falling loosely on her shoulders." She looked more thoughtful than the day previous, and several times raised a small crucifix to her lips, and seemed absorbed in meditation. At a "certain stage of the ceremonies her Highness was led to the high altar, where Cranmer, as archbishop, standing in magnificent vestments, celebrated the Mass of the Holy Ghost," for Cranmer knew how to appear solemn, and grand, and even saintly, on such occasions. He subsequently "anointed Anna as Queen of England." The mass being concluded, "the Queen prostrated herself on her face, and divers silver bells were rung; the monks and abbots chanted a solemn prayer, and Archbishop Cranmer pronounced the benediction." The discharge of cannon, and the flourish of trumpets from without, announced to the multitude that the rival and the enemy of the grand and virtuous Spanish dame who had been a wife and a

Queen for twenty years without reproach, had now been crowned in St. Edward's chair.

When Henry thought proper to make jubilee to celebrate the realization of his whims, however questionable, he was supported by the nobles and many of the time-serving bishops and seculars; but the regular clergy were the virtuous exceptions on those occasions, and were therefore marked out by the court party for extinction at the first suitable opportunity. The monks and friars who were present at Anna's coronation were only present at the command of Archbishop Cranmer. A chronicle of the time says, the monks took part in the ceremony with evident reluctance.

A Flemish noble, who was then in England, observes that the nobility, knights, and esquires, affected to honour lady Anna as if she had been of royal parentage. "The English" (he says) "had no rest in honouring this lovely and lucky woman; but I think they honoured her not to please themselves, but to gain the good graces of his Highness the King. The lords and ladies made merrie dances, and other pastimes, and various games of rarest fashions; and huntings in the woods, of excitement and pleasure. They engaged in many tournaments; the fair maidens and noble dames looked comely, and did charm the lords and knights who knelt before them. A knight came forward and placed his lance on his thigh or fought desperately with his sword. The lords and knights exerted themselves in every pleasant exercise, and all their efforts were gratifying. The music was grand; and the ladyes lovely covered with smiles. . . . All parties made themselves anxious to serve their new Queen, who had a smile and a kind word for all who approached her." The foreign visitor

gives his impression of Henry's treatment of the "new Queen" about this time: "The King entertained her with great honour, and held great intercourse with her; not as a King, nor as a lord, nor as a husband, but as one who wished to be loved and cherished by her. If a pensive thought arose in her mind, he strove to divert it; if she was offended, he soothed her; and trying only to make her satisfied with him, he sought every means of pleasing her." This state of felicity did not long exist; for in the words of one of Anna's advisers, "the King and Queen did not live happily together; neither party had confidence in the fidelity of the other, and bitter words were used by the King to her whom he had so recently styled his 'darling and angel;' the Queen sometimes cried and sat alone for hours; her conscience was uneasy, she was far from being happy." This statement is borne out by some quaint diaries of the Court ladies of the time.

Mr. Froude does not like the bearing of the "new Queen" in her novel circumstances. In his faultless reference to this occasion he depicts faithfully the "present" nature of Anna Boleyn—a nature ignoring the past and future in the ecstasy of the instant. Every lover of truth and honour rejoices at passages like this: "She was conducted (writes Mr. Froude) to the high altar and anointed Queen of England; she received from the hands of Cranmer, fresh come in haste from Dunstable, with the last word of his sentence upon Katherine scarcely silent upon his lip, the golden sceptre and Edward's crown. Did any tinge of remorse, any pang of painful recollection, pierce at that moment the incense of glory which she was inhaling? Did any vision flit across her of a sad, mourning figure which

once had stood where she was standing, now desolate, neglected, sinking into the twilight of a life cut short by sorrow? Who can tell? At such a time that figure would have weighed heavily upon a noble mind, and a wise mind would have been taught by the thought of it, that although life be fleeting as a dream, it is long enough to experience strange vicissitudes of fortune. But Anna Boleyn was not noble and was not wise—too probably she felt nothing but the delicious, all-absorbing, all-intoxicating present, and, if that plain suffering face presented itself to her memory at all, we may fear it was rather as a foil to her own surpassing loveliness.”

There has been much difference of opinion as to whether Anna Boleyn was “exquisitely lovely” or otherwise; but as to the charms of her conversational powers there appears scarcely a question that she “pleased, delighted, and enchanted” her visitors; yet after all, the searching eye might perceive, in that marvellous composite nature, deception and malice artfully concealed; and “good feeling assumed as a becoming robe.” Heylin has contrasted the queenly appearance of Anna Boleyn and Jane Seymour: “If Queen Anna seemed to have the more lively countenance, Queen Jane was thought to carry it in the exact symmetry of her features; but that advantage was overbalanced by the pleasing springliness of Anna, which gained as much upon the hearts of all beholders. There was more majesty in Jane, and more loveliness in Nan.” The Earl of Bedford, who had seen both ladies in the “spring and summer of their glories,” says, that “the richer Queen Jane was in clothes the fairer she appeared, but that the richer Anna was in apparel the worse she looked.” Sharon Turner awards the “palm of the

truest beauty" to Anna Boleyn—oblivious, in one case especially, of the proverb—"Handsome is that handsome does."

In 1534 the Court of Rome made its final decree in the case of Henry and Katherine; and its judgment was against the King. The eyes of all Europe were now fixed on the English monarch. Henry paused as if he felt he stood on the brink of a fearful precipice; but his hesitation was removed by the sight of "his Anna dejected and in tears;" then followed the assuring counsel of his facile advisers, Cranmer and Cromwell. The die was cast, the sword was drawn, and the King and Parliament of England broke off the spiritual allegiance which the country owned to Rome for nearly a thousand years. But the great mass of the English people did not agree with the King and Parliament—which assembly, by-the-way, was not elected by the "people." The movements of the "Pilgrims of Grace" and numerous subsequent insurrections prove the people's non-concurrence: the terrors of the gibbet, the dungeon, and the lash did not affright the honest hearts of Devonshire and other counties, until under Somerset's government the inhabitants were decimated, the fair fields of the west laid desolate, the towns and houses pillaged and fired by ruthless mercenaries from Germany and Italy. The establishment of the new religion in those districts had truly a baptism of blood. The trees groaned with pendent bodies, whilst over the wasted country roamed the widows and orphans of those who perished in that dismal commotion.

BIRTH OF ELIZABETH.—FATE OF THE WITNESSES OF HER
BAPTISM.

IF the result of Henry's second nuptials did not "meet his humour," it unquestionably created as marvellous effects as the birth of monarch has ever wrought in the annals of these realms. Hall, a contemporary, announces the advent of the royal infant in these terms: "On the 7th day of September, being Sunday, between three and four of the clock in the afternoon, the Queen was delivered of a faire ladye, on which day the Duke of Norfolk came home to the christening." May it have been in satiric keeping with the caprice of Henry that the historic "Chamber of the Virgins" had been used for the Queen's lying-in? Anna Boleyn had long and fondly hoped for an heir to suit Henry's wishes; but, with the apt readiness of maternal and conjugal science, she made the best of a mutual disappointment. "They may now," said she, "with reason call this room the 'Chamber of Virgins,' for a virgin is now born in it on the vigil of that auspicious day on which the Church commemorates the nativity of the Virgin Mary." Strange as it may seem, the supremely Protestant Heywood, referring to the fortuitous circumstance of date, honoured the noble accepted Catholic sentiment so far as to intimate that, as Elizabeth was born under the especial patronage of the Blessed Virgin, from the hour of her birth, she "for that cause devoted herself to a maiden life." "The Lady Elizabeth," he says, "was born on the eve of the Virgin's Nativity, and died on the eve of the Virgin's Annunciation. Even that she is now in Heaven withall those blessed virgins that have oil in their lamps."

The ceremonies attendant on the christening of

Elizabeth were most imposing, the decorations resplendent, the rejoicings wide-spread. The officiating prelate was Cuthbert Tunstal, Bishop of Durham, who was also one of the godfathers. The chroniclers of the day run riot in the fervour of description ; but the pens of loyalty the most abject may be excused by the unwonted splendour of those festivities. The eye, however, inevitably reverts from that moment of grandeur to the scenes of later years, and scans the fate of those who took part in that marvellous jubilation. The chief actors stand before us :—

A silver font with a crimson canopy was placed in the middle of the church. The royal babe being brought into the hall, the procession set forward. It commenced with citizens, walking two-and-two, and ended with lords, barons, bishops, and other notables.

Then came Henry, Earl of Essex, bearing the gilt basin. This nobleman was the last of the ancient house of Bouchier who bore that title. He was a man distinguished in the martial games and warlike pageantry of the times. He was a descendant of Thomas of Woodstock, the younger son of Edward III. In a few years subsequent he was killed by a fall from his horse.

The “ salt ” was borne by Henry, Marquis of Dorset, the ill-fated father of Lady Jane Grey, who, after having received the royal pardon for his share in the plot for raising his daughter to the throne, again appeared in arms at the time of Wyatt’s rebellion, and ended his days on the scaffold.

William Courtenay, Marquis of Exeter, appeared in the procession, carrying a taper of “ virgin wax.” This nobleman at a subsequent period forfeited the royal favour. He had the misfortune to be nearly

allied to the throne, his mother being a daughter of Edward IV. At the period of Elizabeth's christening, he was in high esteem with King Henry, who, after setting aside his daughter Mary, declared Exeter heir apparent, to the prejudice of his own sisters. In three years afterwards he became a victim of the King's jealousy; and, on the charge of corresponding with his kinsman Pole, was stripped of his estates and honours.

Another of the train-bearers was Edward Stanley, Earl of Derby. This young nobleman had been educated under the personal inspection of Cardinal Wolsey. He was a faithful subject to four Tudor monarchs, and died "full of days and honours" in 1574.

The chrisom was borne by Lady Mary Howard, daughter of the Duke of Norfolk. This lady subsequently appeared as a witness in the Star Chamber against her own brother, Surrey.

The royal infant, wrapped in a mantle of purple velvet, having a long train furred with ermine, was carried by one of her godmothers, the Dowager-Duchess of Norfolk. This lady afterwards lost royal favour, and was committed to the Tower.

The Dowager-Marchioness of Dorset was the other godmother at the font. Of her four sons three perished on the scaffold, and her granddaughter, Jane Grey, shared the same fate. Her surviving son died a prisoner during the reign of Elizabeth, for the offence of distributing a pamphlet asserting the title of the House of Suffolk to the Crown.

On the same occasion the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk were both present, but the termination of their respective careers was strongly contrasted. Suffolk had the wonderful good fortune never to lose that favour with

his royal master which he had gained as Charles Brandon, the partner of Henry's youthful pleasures. What, probably, may have been the case of this rare instance of good fortune was his marriage with the King's sister.

The Duke of Norfolk met with a different fate, and accidentally escaped the scaffold by the King's demise. Several other persons of distinction who were present at the baptism of Elizabeth, either ascended the scaffold or ended their days in the dungeon. Of the four lords who bore the canopy over the infant, three met a disastrous fate. Viscount Rochford perished by the hands of the headsman; Lord Henry Hussey died a similar death. Lord William Howard suffered a sentence of imprisonment and forfeiture of goods for concealing the alleged misconduct of his niece, Catherine Howard. Lord Thomas Howard, having married a lady of Scottish royal blood, Margaret Douglas, was committed by King Henry to close confinement, from which he was only released by death.

Archbishop Cranmer upon this occasion pronounced a solemn benediction upon Queen Anna and the Infant Princess. The new Queen, perhaps, felt that epoch as the happiest of her life; but those who knew the all-pervading caprice of the then proud father, had already foreseen the day of rue and downfall.

Meanwhile, in her rural retreat, delivered over to the memories of a royal state, to which she had but imparted the halo of her queenly attributes, rested Queen Katherine, to whom the husband of her youth and love now thought proper to pay the cruel compliment of informing her of the passing events of his great breach of marital faith.

The conduct of Archbishop Lee, and of Tonsal, Bishop of Durham, during the schemes for the King's divorce, clearly indicates the state of apprehension in which the minds of men who should be most free from such influences were held by the dread of Henry's ungovernable will. The report of those two prelates to the King, as to their interview with Queen Katherine with reference to Cranmer's sentence of divorce, the King's marriage, and the very proximate birth of Elizabeth, is a remarkable document. In one passage of this report they aver that they styled Cranmer's judgment a "lawful sentence," and added, that "public thanks had been given for the marriage and the birth," for to Katherine both events were contemporaneously announced. In her dignified reply, Katherine declared her belief that Cranmer was but the "King's shadow," and that she still "in her conscience regarded herself as a wife and a Queen, from which position no earthly power could divorce her." To add insult to injury, some of the relatives of Anna Boleyn were sent by the King, warning Katherine against continuing to style herself Queen.

LATIMER'S SERMONS AT THE STAKE.

Just at this time, May, 1535, some Dutch Anabaptists were cited at St. Paul's to answer the charge of heresy preferred against them by Cromwell's Cabinet. Stowe briefly relates the circumstance: "Nineteen men and six women, born in Holland, whose opinions were first, that in Christ are not two natures, God and man; secondly, that Christ took neither flesh nor blood of the Virgin Mary; thirdly, that children born of infidel

parents may be saved; fourthly, that baptism of children is of no effect; fifthly, that the Sacrament of Christ's Body is but bread only; sixthly, that he who after baptism sinneth willingly, sinneth deadly, and cannot be saved. Fourteen of them were condemned to the flames; a man and a woman were burnt in Smithfield, and the other twelve were sent into the country to be consumed at the stake." Little more is known of this horrible affair than that the victims died with enthusiasm. Latimer, who became somewhat remarkable at this period for his sermons to those who "were tied up to the stake," approved of the execution of these ignorant fanatics. "A brave death" (he says) "is no proof of a good cause. It is no good argument, my friends; this is a discernible argument, he went to his death boldly—ergo he standeth in a just quarrel. The Anabaptists that were burned here in divers places in England, as I heard of creditable men—I saw them not myself—went to their deaths intrepid, as you will say; without any fear in the world, and cheerfully too. Well, let them go. There was in the old times another kind of poisonous heretics that were called Donatists; and these heretics went to their execution as they should have gone to some jolly recreation or banquet, or to some belly-cheer or a play" (Latimer's Sermons, p. 160). Such was Latimer's opinion: a conviction he did not seem to disown when on October 16, 1555, he himself tasted of the "purifying fire." Did he, at the supreme hour realize the Divine menace, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge;" or did Ridley, at the stake, remember his own jeering words to Joan Knell when he consigned her to the flames—"that burning to death didn't hurt much?"

Mr. Blunt, in recurring to this particular period, is not disposed to estimate the Anabaptists in a high social or religious point of view. "They were," he observes, "becoming dangerous by the contagious rapidity with which their socialist and infidel principles spread among the lower classes." Archbishop Cranmer considered them a "mischievous people, who were opposed to every settled form of government."

Of all the "Smithfield sermons" preached by Latimer, coarse and unfeeling as they were, none was so repellent as that delivered by him against his brother priest, Dr. Forest, as he was hanging in chains roasting over the fire! Latimer asked Forest whether he would live or die? "I will die," was the reply, "do your worst upon me; seven years ago you durst not for your life have preached such words as you have now. And if an angel from heaven should come down and teach me any other doctrines than those which I learned as a child, I would not believe him. Take me; cut me to pieces, joint from joint, burn, hang, do what you will, I will be true henceforth to the faith of my fathers" (Stowe's *Chronicles*). Hall and Foxe proclaim Forest as "impenitent;" that he "put no trust in his Saviour." Forest's offence was that of denying the King's supremacy. He was a scholar and theologian of a high order, and an ecclesiastic of the most stainless reputation. Mr. Froude says that Dr. Forest "went his way through treason and perjury to the stake;" yet he fails to establish a single offence against him, unless it be treason to protest against the divorce of a lawful and virtuous Queen. Dr. Forest's fate was another of Anna Boleyn's triumphs. Forest was warden of the Observant Fathers at Greenwich. This

order long enjoyed the patronage of Queen Katherine ; they, however, paid the penalty of their fidelity to the cause of truth : some of them were imprisoned, their property confiscated, and the order dissolved.

The contrast between Dr. Forest and Latimer was remarkable. The latter was known to be an indifferent scholar, and a worse theologian ; a man of violent temper and extreme views ; “coarse and thoughtless in his manners, yet personally virtuous.” He did not approve of the conduct of the Reformers in plundering the heritage of the poor, and publicly denounced them as landlords ; he complained of the “lack of learning” under their rule ; nevertheless, he continued to act with them, and became the instrument of Somerset’s and Northumberland’s cruelty. He joined the Reformers from a feeling of disappointment and obstinacy. Possessed of small talents and a mutable judgment, he was nevertheless suited to the purposes of the men who employed him, and a ready participator in the evil deeds and cruelties of the period.

THE CARTHUSIAN FATHERS.

A RECENT essayist, designated as of “broad Church views,” has described the monasteries in the provinces as “comparatively virtuous,” whilst the members of those near London were “lazy and profligate.” This allegation does not correspond even with the prepared returns of Dr. London and Dr. Layton to Cromwell. It may as well be seen what are the mature opinions on the character of one of the most important houses in London, given by Mr. Froude—the Carthusians :

“In general the house was perhaps the best ordered in England. The hospitality was well sustained, the charities were profuse, and whatever we may think of the intellect which could busy itself with fancies seemingly so childish, the monks were true to their vows, and true to their duty as far as they comprehended what duty meant. Among many good, the prior John Houghton was the best. He was of an old English family, and had been educated at Cambridge, where he must have been the contemporary of Latimer. At the age of twenty-eight he took the vows of a monk, and had been twenty years a Carthusian at the opening of the troubles of the Reformation. He is described as small in stature, in figure graceful, in countenance dignified. In manner he was most modest; in eloquence most sweet; in chastity without a stain. We may readily imagine his appearance, with that feminine austerity of expression which has been well said belongs so peculiarly to the features of the mediæval ecclesiastics. Such was the society of the monks of the Charter House, who in an era too late for their continuance, and guilty of being unable to read the signs of the times, were summoned to wage an unequal battle with the world” (vol. ii. p. 346). Men immured in monasteries, and only bending their mind to the purposes of good, may not fairly be found fault with for not being able to read the “signs of the times” out of doors as traced by the felon hands of licentious monarchs and their wicked instruments. In reading Mr. Froude one is led to the belief that it is the work of many hands, so inconsistent with itself is that history. The Carthusians had made themselves specially obnoxious to Henry and Anna Boleyn in the

divorce controversy, by openly espousing the cause of Queen Katherine. They incurred of course the enmity of Anna's family and those who acted with them, and both the concealed and avowed Reformers, who could ill brook the high reputation which the Carthusians held, rejoiced at the fact that they "crossed the King in his inclination." Such men as London and Layton were glad that the outspoken honesty of the Carthusians had placed them within the range of danger; Cromwell and his followers coveted their property; Cranmer, Poynt, and Coverdale were deadly enemies, whilst their malice was carefully concealed; Cranmer could not understand their high sense of principle; Coverdale's aversion arose from an envy of their blameless character; and Poynt, in his revels with Dr. London, scoffed at their humility and questioned their chastity—a virtue which the grossness of his nature could but little comprehend. Such was a portion of the elements united in 1535 for the immolation of the Carthusian Fathers of the Charter House. More and Fisher lay in the Tower awaiting their trial and doom. The oath of supremacy was now about to be tendered to the clergy, and a large number of the Seculars, and many of the Regulars, being terror-stricken, accepted it. The Bishop of Durham declaimed from the pulpit against the Pope, although it would be no injustice to say that he did not entertain one of the sentiments which he expressed. Several of the bishops "went through the form" of subscribing to the oath of supremacy. Every day the clergy and laity acted more subserviently towards the Crown. The King's ministers had all taken the oath; and "why," said Sir Thomas Audley, "should the good fathers of the Charter House refuse to do as all honest

men did?" The royal commissioners appeared at the Charter House to give notice to the Prior and his brethren that the oath of supremacy should be taken by "every loyal subject and pious Christian." The Prior replied, on the part of the monks, that he "knew nothing of such matters, and could not meddle with them." The result of this visitation was the committal of the Prior to the Tower, where he remained one month; and upon the suggestion of some clerical friend he agreed to take the proposed oath with "certain reservations." He was discharged from custody on these conditions. Returning to the Charter House he assembled his brethren, told them the promise he had made to Lord Cromwell; he was dissatisfied with what he did: it looked like deceit; he wished to save the Carthusians from being dispersed, but, above all, he hoped to preserve the principles and vows by which they were so long bound together. They apprehended the future, but none of them could imagine that the hour of martyrdom was so near. The Commissioners came again, with the Lord Mayor of London, to tender the oath: it was rejected; imprisonment and torture were menaced; and as it was known that Lord Cromwell was "terrible in his wrath," the community gave way.

Maurice Chauncy, one of the few who subsequently escaped slaughter, describes what occurred. "We all swore," he says, "as we were required, making one condition, that we submitted only so far as it was lawful for us so to do. Thus, like Jonah, we were delivered from the belly of this monster, this *immanis ceta*, and began again to rejoice like him under the shadow of the gourd of our own houses. But it is better to trust in

the Lord than in princes, in whom is no salvation ; God had prepared a worm² that smote our gourd and made it to perish."

In a short time the Carthusians received notice that their acceptance of the oath in the "form and feeling" they adopted it, was an evasion of a legal obligation. As the friends of Queen Katherine they would now bear the full weight of Anna Boleyn's resentment ; her influence was all-powerful at this period, and she exercised it for the disgrace or the destruction of those who had crossed the path of her ambition. The Carthusian fathers, therefore, were placed under the ban of treason ; and their eager enemies became doubly vigilant. Every day brought them fresh troubles, and the Prior considered their case hopeless. One morning, having summoned all the monks before him, he addressed them as follows : "Brothers, very sorry am I, and my heart is heavy, especially for you, my younger friends, of whom I see so many around me. Here you are living in your innocence. The yoke will not be laid on your necks, nor the rod of persecution, but if you are taken hence, and mingle among the Gentiles you may learn the works of them, and having begun in the spirit you may be consumed in the flesh. And there may be others among us whose hearts are still infirm. If these mix again with the world, I fear how it may be with them ; and what shall I say, and what I shall do, if I cannot save those whom God has trusted to my charge?"

"Then all who were present burst into tears, and cried with one voice, 'Let us die together in our integrity, and heaven and earth shall witness for us how

² By the phrase "worm" is meant the Supremacy Act, with high treason as its penalty.

unjustly we are cut off!’” In reference to this scene Mr. Froude indulges in a touch of nature for which he deserves credit. Although his crinial knowledge excels that of the older historians, who have never favoured us with the colour of the hair of Leonidas, Agesilaus, or any other Spartans of great fame, it is acceptable to read a verity when he vouchsafes a picture of less patent peculiarities—virtue, truth, and honour, for instance: “Thus, with an unobtrusive nobleness, did these poor men prepare themselves for their end; not less beautiful in their resolution, not less deserving the everlasting remembrance of mankind, than those three hundred who, in the summer morning, sate combing their *golden* hair in the pass of Thermopylae. We will not regret their cause; yet there is no cause for which any man can more nobly suffer than to witness that it is better for him to die than to speak words which he does not mean. Nor in this, their hour of trial, were they left without higher comfort” (vol. ii. p. 351).

The Carthusians received a further respite until the fate of other political accused was decided. The Government at length gave a final warning to the brethren of the Charter House. Webster, Laurence, and Hampton, the Friars of the Carthusian Houses, were summoned before Lord Cromwell; they were still “obstinate and wicked in their opinions,” and were committed to the Tower, with Reynolds, one of the monks of Sion. These four ecclesiastics—all remarkable for learning and personal worth—were brought on the 26th of April, 1535, before the Privy Council, of which Lord Cromwell was the leading spirit. The oath of supremacy was again tendered to them; but they respectfully declined taking it. Three days later they were placed at the

bar before a special commission and indicted for high treason. They pleaded not guilty; contending that the statute itself was unlawful. What they "had spoken in the Tower and before the Privy Council," was adduced in evidence against them. One of the judges asked Haughton the Prior, "not to show so little wisdom as to maintain his own opinion against the consent of the King." Haughton replied, that "he had originally resolved to imitate the example of his Divine Master before Herod, and be silent." "But" (he continues) "since you urge me, that I may satisfy my own conscience and the consciences of those who are present, I will say that if our opinion of the Supremacy Act might go by the suffrage of men, it should have more witnesses than yours. You can produce on your side but the parliament of a single kingdom; I, on mine, have the whole Christian world except this kingdom. Nor have you all even of your own people. The lesser part is with you. The majority who seem to be with you do but dissemble to gain favour with the King; or for fear they should lose their honours and their dignities."

Lord Cromwell inquired of whom the Prior was speaking? Haughton replied:—"Of all the good men in the realm; and when his Highness the King knoweth the real truth, I know he will be beyond measure offended with those of his bishops who have given him this advice."

"Why," remarked another of the judges, "have you, Maister Prior, contrary to the King's authority within the realm, persuaded so many persons as you have done to disobey the King and the Parliament?"

"I have declared my opinion," replied Haughton, "to no man living but to those who came to me in con-

fession, which, in discharge of my conscience, I would not refuse. But if I did not declare it then, I will declare it now, because I am thereto obliged to God." (Strype's Memorials, vol. i., p. 305.) Houghton and his companions at the bar would not seek mercy at the cost of what they felt to be a great religious principle.

About this time Cromwell had recourse to the most detestable schemes to procure evidence against ecclesiastics as to their opinions on the Supremacy question ; but the most infamous of all the plans he devised was that of sending persons of abandoned character to confession, to "certain priests," and "there and then" asking the confessor's opinion on the Supremacy law ; declaring that they had conscientious scruples against it. These wretches elicited the secret opinion of the confessor, and a few hours subsequently placed a statement, based upon information obtained by their sacrilege, in the hands of Lord Cromwell. This device led to the destruction and imprisonment of many priests, of whose special records there is now no accurate statement ; but amongst the State Papers are to be seen the declarations said to be "confessions" made by informers in Cromwell's interest. Priests who were timid or perhaps dishonest, or of a worldly disposition, took the Supremacy oath publicly, and in "confession and otherwise" gave an opposite opinion. This was unhappily the case with many of the Secular clergy, who afterwards became what were called "Reformers." Such conduct, however, is not to be wondered at, for the terror of Lord Cromwell's fearful vengeance seemed to have affrighted all classes of society, lay and clerical. A priest, in a "doubtful state of conscience," had in 1534, an interview with Archbishop Cranmer on the Supre-

macy statute. "I told" (he says) "the Archbishop I would pray for the Pope as the Chief and Papal Head of Christ's Church. And his Grace of Canterbury told me it was the King's pleasure that I should not do so. I said unto him, I would do it; and though I did it not openly, yet would I do it secretly. And then the Archbishop said I might pray for him secretly, but in any wise do it not openly³." Mr. Froude doubts the accuracy of the above statement. He thinks it is "coloured;" and adds—"It is characteristic of the mild, tender-hearted man who desired to glide round difficulties rather than scale and conquer them." (Note on vol. ii., p. 319.) But was not this advice of the tender-hearted Archbishop something like misprision of treason on the part of his conscience to his God?

To return to the Carthusian Fathers. The Priors were again consigned to the Tower, and on the following day their case was submitted to a "jury," for the poor accused were indulged with the seeming of legality—a grim and cruel farce. Five of them were charged with high treason, and the evidence was of the usual character. Feron and Hale threw themselves on the mercy of the court. The jury hesitated for some time, but it is said on receiving a visit from Cromwell they agreed to return a verdict of guilty against four of the prisoners⁴. Feron was acquitted. Father Hale and

³ Rolls House MSS., "concerning a Popish Priest."

⁴ It has been stated that, in this particular case, Cromwell did not "visit the jury." It is easier to deny than to prove; but the weight of allegation at least, and the unwonted hesitation of the jury, go far in evidence of the "visitation." It is an undoubted fact, that Cromwell, in the beginning, treated with juries, and even menaced them with death; but, as he gained experience, he adopted the readiest mode of having juries chosen who could "make a quick return without any compunctious hesitation." The example has not since been lost.

the Carthusians “were not permitted to die together.” Haughton replied to the judge, that his sentence was merely the judgment of the world. They all appeared happy, and rejoiced, they said, that they had an opportunity of dying for the Catholic Faith. In five days subsequent, Haughton and the other Priors were executed at Tyburn in their vestments. A chronicler of the times says, “such a scene as hanging priests in their vestments was never before known to Englishmen.” Haughton had the privilege of first ascending the scaffold, when he addressed the populace as follows:—“My good people, I call to witness Almighty God, and all good people, and I beseech you all here present to bear witness for me at the Day of Judgment, that being here to die, I declare that it is from no obstinate rebellious pretext that I do not obey the King, but because I fear to offend the Majesty of God. Our Holy Mother the Church has decreed otherwise than the King and his Parliament have decreed; and, therefore, rather than disobey the Church I am ready to suffer. Pray for me, and have mercy on my brethren, of whom I have been the unworthy Prior.”

Kneeling down, he repeated aloud the 51st Psalm; then making the sign of the Cross with great devotion, he informed the executioners that he was ready for them. The remainder of the proceedings were brief. He was thrown off “amidst a thrill of horror.” His brethren followed on the same death-road, reciting a hymn, undaunted and firm in appearance. They died in a manner worthy of the martyrs of antiquity. “The faces of these men,” writes Mr. Froude, “did not grow pale, their voices did not choke; they declared themselves liege subjects of the King, and obedient children

of Holy Church, giving thanks that they were held worthy to suffer for the truth." All died without a murmur. The stern work was ended with quartering the bodies; and the arm of Haughton was hung up as a bloody sign over the archway of the Charter House, to awe the remaining brethren into submission. But the spirit of the old martyrs was in those young friars. One of them, like the Theban sister, bore away the honoured relic and buried it; and all of them resolved to persist in their opposition.

After that sad and deadly sign, "another warning" was sent to the Charter House; but of no avail. In six weeks three more of the Fathers went through the form of a trial. Hall alleges that they "behaved sulky and insolent to Lord Cromwell." They were neither sulky nor insolent. As a body they were educated, well-bred men; and, in the words of Haughton, "many of them of noble families." Hall, whose servile adulation of Henry was conspicuous, even in that reign of slaves and terrorism, consulted his own stupendous notions of obedience to kingly caprice in describing facts, which, to judge from other statements made by him, would have been more justly presented if left to his unbiassed judgment and native sense of justice. But the more accurate description of the scene was, that they became indifferent to the deceptive formalities of the trial, and proclaimed their adhesion to all the tenets of the olden creed, denouncing the King as a "spiritual impostor." These words sealed their doom. The jury, prompt at their task, pronounced them guilty of high treason; and in a few days they were hanged, drawn, and quartered. Some few of the brethren fled to France, and others to Ireland; but the greater number remained in the

Priority to await their fate. Lord Cromwell was well aware of the stainless reputation of this community; indeed they were so far above reproach, that Dr. London and his spies did not attempt to impeach them. Some persons who were in Cromwell's service promised to procure evidence of "laziness and immorality" against six of the Fathers. Cromwell replied that he "would not hear the accusation; that it was false—wilfully so." Cranmer, at the eleventh hour, relented as to the Carthusians, and sent his secretary to remonstrate with them; but it did not suit his sense of justice to go further—perhaps he dared not do so. The Carthusians had one secret enemy constantly and earnestly working for their destruction—that enemy was Anna Boleyn. She never forgave them for the zeal and energy with which they maintained the matrimonial rights of Katherine of Arragon. They described her as a "plebeian, and a mistress who dishonoured the name of Queen." Her influence at this time was all-powerful, and she used it without any consideration as to the consequences: indeed, her malice against those who then thwarted her ambition was fatal; and Wolsey's illustration of the "night-crow haunting the pillow of its victims," proved to be, in this case, a melancholy fact.

Cromwell and the King again hesitated. Did they fear public opinion? Two secular priests—mere creatures of Cromwell—were sent to take charge of what remained of the Charter House community; and Chauncy states that those priests "starved and ill-treated himself and his companions." Their friends and relatives were sent to them, "to advise and remonstrate on their conduct;" they were "coaxed and threatened" alternately, but with no effect. Four of them were

brought to Westminster Abbey to hear one of the Court prelates preaching a sermon against the Pope. They "still continued obstinate." A number of them were then dispersed amongst other communities, with pliant secular priests as "confessors." The seculars could not change the Carthusians. The supposed worldly aspirations of the young, and the talent and ambition of maturer age, were in turn tempted by seductive promises of a future career, but with no effect; gold, "solid gold," could not purchase even the semblance of an agreement to the King's views of religion; nor the scaffold, with its reeking horrors, of its stifling, decapitation, and quartering, brought no fear—none whatever. In the words of Mr. Froude, "nothing answered." Two of the brotherhood who escaped joined the Pilgrims of Grace; a reward was offered for their heads; they were taken prisoners, and without further ceremony hanged in chains near the city of York. We extract the following passage from the diary of Stephen Lee, Esq., "sometime secretary to the Archbishop of York," concerning the execution of the Carthusians at the cathedral city: "I am sick in my head and in my heart at what I did see this day⁵. The good Fathers, who were all their lives doing good for sinners, widows, and orphans, died this day very grandly. They told the people never to desert the old religion of England, because it controlled the bad conscience of man and made people honest. And the people cried out, 'It is so! it is so!' and they said many other things, which was to the same and like things which was said in London and other places; on

⁵ The date is not legible. This diary is now in the possession of Thomas Lee, Esq., an English resident of Rouen.

the scaffold. The Fathers were hung up like robbers ; their bodies stripped naked before the multitude, and then cut up like oxen. The women shrieked in a wild voice, and the men cursed and cried out for revenge. Bad work ; what will be the end ? ”

The whole of the Charter House Fathers were now cut off from their House and property. Cromwell laid his hands upon all they possessed ; even family memorials, which many of them wished to preserve, were carried away ; shame, decency, every element of honest or delicate feeling were ignored on this occasion, and the indignation of the people was intense ; for the Carthusians were honoured and loved by persons of all opinions. The tragic history of the Charter House, however, does not end here. The ten remaining Fathers were sent to the then hideous dungeons of Newgate ; where nine of them died from a “ prison fever,” produced by bad air, bad food, and filth. The survivor of the ten was hanged, drawn, and quartered. Maurice Chauncy, whose chronicle briefly relates their sad story, escaped to France. His narrative is borne out by many of the records and State papers of the time ; and its truth is reluctantly admitted by hostile historians.

An official, named Bedyll, announced to the Lord Cromwell the death of the nine Carthusians in Newgate in these words : “ By the hand of God, my very good Lord, after my most hearty commendations, it shall please your lordship to understand that the monks of the Charter House, here in London, who were committed to Newgate for their traitorous behaviour long time continued against the King’s Grace, be almost now dispatched by the hand of God Almighty, as may appear to you by this bill enclosed ; whereof, considering their

behaviour and the whole matter, I am not sorry, but would that all such as love not the King's Highness, and his worldly honour, were in a like case." (Secretary Bedyll to the Lord Cromwell.) Such is a short history, containing facts seldom presented to the public, of the end of the old inmates of the Charter House in the times antecedent to the Reformation.

Have matters been mended by the change as regards the "Charter House by Smithfield?" When in possession of the devoted Fathers the establishment was a synonym for Christian charity, learning, and hospitality. Many members of noble houses, laying aside worldly honours, vowed themselves to the work of their Redeemer; and in their sacred democracy joined to them as brethren the poorest of the poor who possessed the distinction of virtue—sanctity of life and learning constituting the sole right to eminence amongst them. Have three centuries and more, with all the advancing lights and accumulations of knowledge, manifested a concurrent progress in this once grand old institution? It has passed through many hands. What is it to-day? Another of the sadly misused charities of London—a *hospitium* for those who have friends sufficiently influential to obtain an inexpensive provision for men whom they have not themselves the generosity to support. None of the monastic establishments of England suffered a more signal injustice than this; but the Fathers were spared the witnessing of its results. The inquisitors did their work thoroughly; and, whilst seizing the possessions which the Carthusians held in trust for the poor⁶,

⁶ There is but a small portion of the Carthusian property attached to the present Charter House. As to the present "Charter-house School," it is a milder iniquity than that of "Christ Church in Newgate-street."

they cleared off the trustees by the gibbet, the rack, and the dungeon. Such was one hideous phase of an epoch, when the passions of a tyrant, abetted by wicked and servile subordinates, overruled all the ordinances of law, order, and justice.

JOHN FISHER, BISHOP OF ROCHESTER.

THE last survivor of Henry's father's council, and the prelate whom his grandmother (the Countess of Richmond) recommended as a learned, wise, and virtuous man, to become the preceptor of her grandson, was the next person marked out for royal vengeance.

John Fisher was born in the reign of Henry VI., in the town of Beverley, where his family had been located for centuries. He studied in Cambridge under Father Melton, a learned and pious divine. In 1491 he was ordained priest, at which period (says Bayley) "the almond tree began to bud; all the arts and sciences were but his tools, but this his occupation." In Cambridge his learning, humility, and piety, won for him the esteem and love of "fellows, masters, and students;" and there he remained until the "University's" highest honours were conferred, or rather imposed upon him. The "good Margaret, Countess of Richmond," aided by the solicitations of her son (Henry VII.), induced him to become confessor and almoner to that benevolent lady. In this office Father Fisher gained the deserved respect of the Countess and the royal family, who were "for years governed by his wisdom and discretion." He constantly recommended to his "wealthy penitent" the practice of charity in some amiable form—such as the "relief of persons of education who met with trials

in life ;” to “succour orphans, especially females ;” to “redeem captives ;” to promote the marriage of poor and virtuous virgins, giving to each of them a small dowry ;” to “induce men to marry those maids whom they had dishonoured ;” to “repair bridges, that the poorer people might go to market ;” to “look after the widow and the orphan ;” to “reconcile village quarrels ;” to “induce husbands and wives to love one another, and set a good example to their children.” These were the maxims which John Fisher inculcated upon his royal penitent—injunctions which her grandson obeyed in the hopeful morning of his life.

At Dr. Fisher’s recommendation the Countess of Richmond endowed two Colleges—one at Cambridge, the other at Oxford ; as well as several benevolent institutions for the benefit of the people. In 1504 he was appointed to the See of Rochester by Henry VII., which appointment was confirmed by Pope Julius the Second. He was at that time in his forty-fifth year ; and a contemporary has remarked that very “few priests or bishops ever went so much among the people, or preached so many sermons to them, as the ‘good Maister Fisher.’” The cause of his promotion, it was alleged, arose from the interest he possessed at Court ; but this allegation was contradicted by the King, who declared that the “pure devotion, perfect sanctity, and great learning which he had observed in the man, were the cause which had induced him to recommend the name of Maister Fisher to the Pope.” The numerous friends of the new prelate had much difficulty in inducing him to accept the mitre ; but when consecrated, he brought all the energy of his vigorous and honest heart to promote the interests of religion. The humblest and frailest

had access to him, receiving relief, words of comfort and hope. Nearly two hundred persons were fed daily at his expense; and the men of learning and science from foreign lands received a hospitable reception at his palace. The cause of his want of appreciation amongst Protestants may be found in the fact, that when Luther's writings were imported into England he denounced them in "vigorous language, and stood forth boldly for the maintenance of the olden creed in all its integrity," which won for him the secret hatred of wordly ecclesiastics and evil laity, of whom there were many in those days; but neither the efforts of the venal laity, nor the subservient spiritual Convocation, could influence his opinions as to what he styled the "coming storm."

A Synod having been convoked to "take into consideration certain Church reforms," Dr. Fisher addressed the Cardinal of York (Wolsey), and the assembled prelates, in these words:—

"May it not seem displeasing to your Eminence, and the rest of these grave and reverend Fathers of the Church, that I speak a few words, which I hope may not be out of season. I had thought that when so many learned men, as substitutes for the clergy, had been drawn into this body, that some good matters should have been propounded for the benefit and good of the Church, that the scandals that lie so heavy upon her men, and the disease which takes such hold on these advantages, might have been hereby at once removed, and also remedied. Who hath made any the least proposition against the ambition of those men whose pride is so offensive, while their profession is humility? or against the incontinency of such as have vowed chastity? How are the goods of the Church wasted? The lands,

the tithes, and other oblations of the devout ancestors of the people, wasted in superfluous riotous expenses? How can we expect our flocks to fly the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, when we that are bishops set our minds on nothing more than that which we forbid? If we should teach according to our duty, how absurdly would our doctrines sound in the ears of those who should hear us? And if we teach one thing, and do another, who believeth our report? which would seem to them no otherwise than as if we should throw down with one hand what we build with the other? We preach humility, sobriety, contempt of the world, and the people perceive in the same men that preach this doctrine, pride and haughtiness of mind, excess in apparel, and a resignation of ourselves to all worldly pomps and vanities. And what is this otherwise than to set the people in a stand, whether they shall follow the sight of their own eyes, or the belief of what they hear. Excuse me, reverend Fathers, seeing herein I blame no man more than I do myself, *for sundry times, when I have settled myself to the care of my flock, to visit my diocese, to govern my Church, to answer the enemies of Christ, suddenly there hath come a message to me from the Court, that I must attend such a triumph, or receive such an ambassador. What have we to do with princes' Courts?* If we are in love with majesty, is there one of greater excellence than Him whom we serve? If we are in love with stately buildings, are their roofs higher than our cathedrals? If with apparel, is there a greater ornament than that of priesthood? Or is there better company than a communion with the saints? Truly, most reverend Fathers, what this vanity in temporal things may work in you, I know

not ; but sure I am that in myself, I find it to be a great impediment to devotion ; wherefore, I think it necessary, that we, who are the heads, should begin to give example to the inferior clergy as to those particulars whereby we may all the better be conformable to the image of God in this trade of life which we now lead ; neither can there be likelihood of perpetuity or safety to the clergy as we remain at present⁷."

He then gave a solemn warning as to the assumption of "spiritual headship" by the King. "Beware that you leap not out of Peter's ship to be drowned in the waves of all heresies, sects, schisms, and divisions." Bayley says of this synod:—"After Bishop Fisher uttered these and many other such words to this effect, with such gravity as well became him, they all seemed to be astonished, by their silence ; and the Lord Cardinal's state did not seem to become him." The address to the synod was evidently levelled at the Cardinal of York, and one or two wealthy bishops who were profuse in their style of living. In a few weeks subsequently the fruits of Fisher's discourse were perceptible in many parts of the country. A "rigid inspection of parishes;" the bishops giving audience to many that were "poor, lame, and blind." "Rich priests or rich bishops I look upon as bad men. As the shepherds of Jesus Christ they cannot indulge themselves in slothful ease, living on many dainty dishes and drinking exciting wines, whilst the sheep and poor little lambs are wandering about cold and hungry. The shepherd must be stirring with the lark, watching and seeking out the stray sheep, and bringing them back to the one true fold again. A priest must submit to

⁷ See Bayley's "Life of Fisher" (black letter).

every privation and hardship; he must have no family cares; he must use all his judgment and temper to bring back the fallen; and he must execute this holy office by gentle remonstrance, by never-ceasing prayer to the Lord Jesus and the Court of Heaven, and by good example, which has at all times had a powerful effect on sinners." Such were the words of Bishop Fisher to the Dean of Rochester a few months before he was committed to the Tower. A man of these views could not have been very acceptable to the men who favoured and compassed the "new learning."

In Dean Collet's sermon before the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury, preached by the special desire of Archbishop Wareham, there is a powerful appeal made to the prelates and clergy to become "less worldly in their occupations; to preach sermons; to distribute alms; to give good example to the people, and to study no other calling but the salvation of souls⁸." Some Catholics have denounced Collet as a "heretic," and Anglican writers assert that he was "a hidden Protestant." He was neither; but rather an austere man who wished to see Churchmen living according to the discipline of primitive Christianity. This was not altogether possible: still some approach might have been made to primitive practices, ordaining no man who was not possessed of a "calling for the sacred office;" or, in the words of Bishop Fisher, who were not "well tested, and purged of worldly motives by refraining from secular occupations and the amusements of the laity." Collet was, therefore, in no favour with the seculars, or those bishops and abbots who were seeking

⁸ An English Translation of this discourse appears in Knight's "Life of Collet," pp. 181—191.

at Court advantages for themselves or their families. He "called out in Convocation and in synod for a more strict discipline of the clergy;" for "constant preaching; for visiting and instructing the poor, and reclaiming sinners." He had a high opinion of the Carthusian Fathers. He never dissented from any Catholic doctrine, but the reformation at which he aimed was that of "manners and discipline."

Ambrose Asham (a Franciscan) represents Collet "as a vain, proud, restless man, who thought himself the most unblemished shepherd." One of the arguments advanced for the Protestantism of Collet is that he "did not make a Popish will, having left no monies for masses for his soul; which shows that he did not believe in Purgatory." All his sermons proved the contrary; and the fact of his frequent visits to the Carthusians confirms his thorough Catholicity.

In 1529 the statutes for regulating the clergy met with vigorous opposition from a few of the peers. Fisher spoke, in indignant terms, of the irreligion and dishonesty of the Commons. On the measure for "breaking off spiritual intercourse" with Rome, Fisher, in a speech of great power and vigour, denounced the proposition. "Is his Holy Mother" (he said) "the Church about to be brought like a bonds-maid into thralldom? Want of faith is the true cause of the misfortunes impending over the State." The Duke of Norfolk replied in a speech wherein he used unbecoming language towards the aged prelate. The peer told the bishop that the greatest clerks were not always the wisest men; to which Fisher replied that he "did not remember any fools in his time that had proved great clerks." The Commons, at the instigation of their

Speaker, Audley, expressed great indignation at the Bishop's observations, and sent a deputation, headed by Audley himself, to the King to complain of "how grievously they felt themselves injured by being charged with lack of faith as if they had been infidels or heretics." The "deputation" were conveniently carrying out the King's policy: his Highness gave them a flattering reception, blandly sympathized with their "wounded feelings," and sent for Dr. Fisher to rebuke him for his "bad discourse." The venerable bishop appeared before the King with undaunted mien, but loyal and respectful bearing. He said, "that having a seat and a voice in Parliament, he spoke his mind freely in defence of the Church which he saw daily injured and oppressed by the common people, whose office it was not to judge of her manners, much less to reform them." The King seemed astonished at this bold reply, but knowing the high integrity of his ancient preceptor he perhaps secretly admitted his judicious views of Church government. He dismissed the bishop with these words:—"My good Lord of Rochester, use more conciliatory language in future. Harsh words never mend a quarrel."

Cardinal Pole, who was personally acquainted with Dr. Fisher, describes his virtues in glowing terms. In "*Pro Ecclesiasticæ Unitatis Defensione*" he says, as to his Highness the King, "that if an ambassador had to be sent from earth to Heaven, there could not among all the bishops and clergy be found so fit a man as John Fisher; for what other man have you at present, nor for many years past, who can be compared with him in sanctity, in learning, in his zeal, and careful diligence in the office and various duties

of a bishop? Above all other nations we may justly rejoice in having such a man; and if all the parts of Christendom were searched, there could not be found one man that in all things did accomplish the parts and the degrees of a bishop equal to John Fisher." Sir Thomas More also bears testimony to Fisher's disinterested zeal in the cause which he sustained with his words and example.

Dr. Fisher preached a series of sermons against Luther—one of them at St. Paul's Cross which was attended "by Cardinal Wolsey, ten bishops, and 500 ecclesiastics, and an immense concourse of people." He also delivered public lectures on the same subject at Westminster Abbey and in many of the metropolitan churches. He was most energetic in his opposition to the men of the "new learning;" but that opposition was confined to moral means alone: he never persecuted himself, nor recommended others to do so; yet he has been stigmatized as the "bloudie bishop." His opposition to the divorce of Katherine of Arragon evoked the enmity of the King and of Dr. Cranmer; and before the new form of oath was tendered to him as a spiritual peer, Cranmer and the King were aware that he would not accept it. The honour and integrity of the man were not doubted by any of his enemies; and the King himself declared to Rich that he "looked upon John Fisher as the most able man in his kingdom; that his conscientious character and general honesty could not be doubted; that he esteemed and loved him all his life, and would raise him to the highest position in his councils, if he only agreed to take the oath of supremacy." Papal and anti-Papal notables were sent to remonstrate with him on his "obstinate

perseverance against the command of the King." Audley, Cromwell, Suffolk, and Cranmer, argued the question with him on several occasions; and then came Gardiner, Tunstal, and Bonner, impressing "loyalty" and menacing the terrors of the law; but to all he was alike indifferent, declaring that he could not take the oath proposed "without a violation of a higher and more sacred obligation to his Eternal Creator."

The advice of Cromwell and Cranmer was now acted upon, and the King, laying aside all hesitation, confirmed his dire career of blood and despotism by summoning before the Council his aged preceptor. Before leaving Rochester, the bishop bade farewell to his palace, his servants, and retainers, and set out for London accompanied by a vast crowd of people. One of his quaint biographers describes the scene:—"Passing through the City of Rochester there were a multitude of people gathered together, both citizens and countrymen and women, and many scores of children to whom the goodly bishop gave his blessing; riding by them all the while bareheaded; and the people were all crying and sobbing, for they knew that he would never return to them amore, and others in the crowd cursed those that were persecuting their good old bishop, who was so long amongst them like a father. And as the people thronged round he had a good word for every man, woman, and child; and would have them to pray for his enemies. And then raising his voice very loud he said warning words to them to stand by the old religion of England; and the people all held up their hands, and the women and young maidens were sore affected at the sight; and prayed God to send him back safe; but, alas! he never came that road again. And in this

way and manner the holy bishop did ride on his horse and reached London City about the night of the same day." Upon his arrival at Lambeth Palace Dr. Fisher went through a series of captious examinations before Archbishop Cranmer, Lord Audley, and Cromwell; but he could not be prevailed upon to accept the new oath of supremacy. After each discussion he received so many days "for further consideration." But all proved in vain, and he was ultimately committed to the Tower upon Tuesday the 20th of April, 1533.

Amongst Fisher's early contemporaries were many excellent characters:—Foxe, Bishop of Winchester, for instance, whom Dr. Brewer describes "as the most devout and gentle of all Henry's ministers." He held the office of Lord Treasurer to the King, to the general satisfaction of the Court. Yet he felt himself out of place in spending so much time at Court; and "often prayed to be allowed to return to his diocese, where his presence was required." Wolsey's correspondence with him shows how much he disliked the occupation of a politician. He felt it inconsistent with his duties as a bishop to be engaged so much in secular affairs, and still more in the tortuous intrigues of a Court. The "noblest minds of the time" (writes Brewer) "often experienced the bitter struggle between the King and their conscience, and there were others as well as Dr. Foxe who regretted that they had neglected their spiritual calling in order to govern the State." Foxe, who had formerly been Wolsey's patron and friend, joined the ranks of his opponents. He wrote to Henry "not to suffer the servant to be greater than his master." The King replied, "that he knew well how to retain all his subjects in obedience, but he had

undivided confidence in the wisdom and honesty of the Cardinal of York."

Giustiniani represents Dr. Foxe as a "prelate of extreme authority, which he exercises with moderation and goodness." Almost every foreign ambassador of distinction who visited England in the days of Wolsey speaks of Foxe in eulogistic terms. He was the munificent patron of learning; "the steady friend of the architect, the painter, the poet, and the scholar; his mansions afforded a quiet home to those whose hopes were blighted and whose genius the world left unnoticed." Such is an outline of the general character of the prelate who preceded Wolsey and Gardiner in the See of Winchester. Churchmen were reluctant politicians in those times; the King being often compelled to seek their services, "owing to the ignorance, incapacity, and drunkenness of the nobles." For instance, three of the most powerful noblemen who were contemporaries of Foxe and Fisher—namely, the Dukes of Buckingham and Suffolk, and the Marquis of Dorset, were almost illiterate. They were of course brave in the field, and hospitable in their baronial halls, but at the council-board they were imprudent advisers for the Crown, and no friends to the struggling privileges of the people.

There was another prelate named Edward Fox, Bishop of Hereford, who studied the King's personal requirements and alleged scruples more than the interests of religion. Although his name does not appear much in the divorce controversy, he was nevertheless one of the most active of those engaged in prosecuting that question. He subsequently appears in concert with Archbishops Lee and Cranmer, Cromwell and

Latimer, in "revising and amending" the Liturgy of the Church; proclaiming the King and not the Pope as its Spiritual Head. The reader may, therefore, conjecture to what party he would have ultimately allied himself from the passing panegyric of such men as Latimer. "Surely," says Latimer, "we owe great thanks to Dr. Fox for his diligence in all our proceedings." Fox corresponded with Erasmus and other learned foreigners. He was a man of considerable ability, and in the words of his contemporary, Stephen Oldgate, "he had an honest and virtuous reputation, and did not forget the claims of the poor upon him as a bishop." "It is singular," writes Mr. Blunt, "how small a space in history is occupied by Edward Fox; and yet how great a man he seems to have been." Dr. Fox died of the plague in 1537. The adherents of Queen Katherine, and many of the Papal party also, pronounced his death by the plague as a "visitation for upholding Anna Boleyn's claims to become Queen." Fox has been claimed as a partisan of the Reformation; but the only title for the claim is, that he forwarded those preliminary schemes which finally led to the change of religion. Perhaps not one of the advocates of the divorce contemplated such a result.

To return to Fisher. When he was committed to the Tower, Cromwell's agents visited his palace, where the usual scene of confiscation and plunder took place. A monk, named Lee, who professed Reformation principles, was one of the parties who took an inventory of the bishop's effects, and called the attention of his companions to a strong iron box which was concealed in an apartment for many years, and was supposed to contain some "enormous treasures." Lee, on breaking open

the box, exclaimed "Gold! gold for the bloudie Pope!" When the box was opened it was found to contain a hair-shirt and two whips, which were used by Fisher at certain times in "punishing his own body." Cromwell expressed regret that the box had been opened. The gold cup presented to the bishop by Henry's own mother, as well as the memorials of his grandmother, the good Countess of Richmond, were confiscated. Bishop Fisher's benevolent and interesting will was subsequently cancelled by the King, upon which Bayley observes: "He that made void so many men's wills, had his own made void in every particular." When confined in the Tower, the King again commanded Gardiner, Tunstal, and Bonner, to remonstrate with Fisher on the "imprudence of his conduct in questioning the royal supremacy." Bonner told him that it looked like treason; and Gardiner said that pious men "should be obedient to the powers that be." Tunstal, taking him by the hand, said, "Beloved brother, do not be obstinate; try and please the King, if you can do so without violating your conscience. The King regards you much, and we all love you." His reply was, "My very good friends, and some of you my old acquaintances, I know you wish me no hurt or harm, but a great deal of good; and I do believe that upon the terms you speak of, I might have the King's favour as much as ever. Wherefore if you can answer me one question, I will perform all your desires." "What's that, my lord?" said several prelates. "It is this: 'What will it gain a man to win the whole world and to lose his own soul?'" Gardiner and Bonner became silent; indeed it would not have been prudent for them to express any opinion in the presence of the King's spies.

And again Fisher said, "My lords, it does not grieve me so much to be urged so sorely in a business of this kind, as it doth wound me grievously that I should be urged by you whom it concerns as much as me. Alas! I do but defend your cause, whilst you are pleading against yourselves. It would, indeed, better become us all to stick together in repelling the violence and injustice which are daily put upon our Holy Mother, the Catholic Church, where we have all in common, than to be divided amongst ourselves to help on the mischief. But I see judgment is begun at the house of God; and I see no hope, if we fall, that the rest will stand. You see we are besieged on every side; and the fort is betrayed by those who should defend it; and since we have made no better resistance, we are not the men that shall see an end of these calamities. Wherefore I pray you, my lords, leave me and my cause to the Almighty God, in whom alone there is comfort which no man can deprive me of. You have often told me of the King's heavy displeasure against me; I therefore pray you to remember me to his Highness, and tell him that I had rather exercise the duty that I owe unto him, by praying for him, than in pleasing him in the way and manner you ask me to do."—(See Bayley.)

Thomas Cromwell, imitating the example of Maister Rich, visited Fisher in the Tower, in order to discover his opinions on the Supremacy and other questions. The bishop was courteous but unbending at the interview, and Cromwell would have him to believe that he and Cranmer held him in high esteem. After "much preliminary discourse," Cromwell came to the matter of fatal importance to Fisher. "My Lord of Rochester," said he, "what would you say if the Pope should send

you a cardinal's hat? Would you accept of it?" Bishop Fisher replied, "Good Maister Cromwell, I know myself to be so far unworthy of any such dignity, that I think not of it. But if any such thing should happen, assure yourself that I should turn that favour to the best advantage that I could, in assisting the Holy Catholic Church of Christ; and in that respect I would receive it upon my knees." Cromwell reported this conversation to the King in whatever form suited his policy or his malice. Henry became indignant on hearing of Fisher's reply to his minister. "Yea," said he, "is the old man yet so lusty? Well, let the Pope send him a hat when he will, Mother of God, he shall wear it on his shoulders then, for I will leave him never a head to set it on."

Some of the accusations preferred against Fisher were withdrawn, amongst them that notable one which charged him with aiding and abetting in the "conspiracy formed by the weak-minded nun of Kent;" but Henry and his advisers attached the real weight of offence to Fisher's refusal to take the oath of supremacy. The King and his councillors appreciated fully the power of Fisher's example, and knew the esteem in which he was held by the people—hence the incessant offers of mercy, until the monarch found himself stronger than the people and the law. With a strange notion of justice and honour, Mr. Froude states of this last phase of the venerable prelate's life: "The miserable old man forced himself upon his fate." No; his fate was forced upon him. On one hand of the good old bishop were a brief life and what he deemed crime; on the other, death and fealty to his God. Were his opinions more modern his conscience might have been more elastic;

but Fisher, although a ripe scholar, was no perverter of words; and he died a martyr for that which to his mind assumed the plain meaning of duty.

Upon Dr. Fisher's arrest, his private property was seized, as had been his public, and his very clothing taken from him; without "any consideration for his extreme age he was allowed nothing but rags, which scarce sufficed to cover his nakedness." (See Fisher's Letter; also Fuller's Church Hist., Book v., p. 203; also Hume, vol. iii. p. 192.) One of Henry's recent hero-worshippers alleges that Dr. Fisher was "not treated unkindly," and if "such did occur, it was contrary to the King's wishes." But if the learned gentleman just quoted had made a diligent search amongst the MS. records of Henry's time, he would have found an express order written in the King's own handwriting for the ill-treatment and degradation of his venerable preceptor.

After one year's imprisonment in the Tower, "amidst degradation, bad food, and indecent treatment," Bishop Fisher was placed on his trial (June 17, 1534), before Lord Audley and the High Commissioners in the Court of King's Bench. Lord Cromwell and the Duke of Suffolk were among the Commissioners. Fisher, who was attired in a black gown, was brought up in the custody of the Lieutenant of the Tower. He was scarcely able to stand at the bar from infirmity and old age. A crowd of people from Rochester were there, who raised "loud lamentations" at the sad appearance of their persecuted bishop. The demonstrations of the people were distasteful to the judges, and Audley waved his hand after the fashion of Cromwell, and all became silent. The charge preferred against Fisher was that

he had "treacherously attempted to deprive the King's Highness of his title," by maliciously speaking the following words: "The King our Sovereign Lord is not Supreme Head on earth of the Church of England." The only witness for the Crown was Maister Rich, the Solicitor-General, who, as the reader is aware, visited the bishop in the Tower, in a "friendly manner," to "mend the quarrel" between the King and him. Rich turned a confidential communication into evidence—and appeared as a witness for the Crown! In the history of judicial proceedings, there is perhaps nothing on record to equal Rich's conduct on this occasion. Dr. Fisher stood alone, without counsel or friend, against the Crown lawyers, judges, and commissioners. He spoke of the manner in which the evidence against him was elicited: "Maister Rich, I cannot but marvel to hear you come and bear witness against me of those words. This man, my lords, came to me from the King, as he said, on a secret message, with commendations from his Grace, declaring what good opinion his Highness the King had of me, and how sorry he was of my trouble, and many more words not now fit to be recited, as I was not only ashamed to hear them, but also knew right well that I could no way deserve them. At last he broke to me the matter of the King's Supremacy, telling me that his Highness, for better satisfaction of his own conscience, had sent him unto me in this secret manner to know my full opinion in the matter, for the great affection he had always for me more than any other man. When I had heard this message, I put him in mind of the new Act of Parliament, which, standing in force as it does, might thereby endanger me very much, in case I should utter

any thing against its provisions. To that he (Rich) made answer, 'That the King willed him to assure me, upon his honour and on the word of a king, too, that whatever I should say unto him by this his secret messenger, I should abide no peril for it, although my words were ever so directly against the statute, seeing it was only a declaration of my mind secretly as to his own person.' And the same messenger (Rich) gave me his solemn promise that he never would mention my words to any living soul, save the King's Highness himself. Now, therefore, my lords, seeing it pleased the King's Highness to send to me thus secretly to know my poor advice and opinion, which I most gladly was, and ever will be, ready to offer to him when so commanded, methinks it very hard to allow the same as sufficient testimony against me to prove me guilty of high treason⁹."

Fisher's speech was received with loud demonstrations of applause; almost every one present—save the "judicial slayers,"—felt horrified at the conduct of Rich, who rose to reply undismayed or in any way abashed. He said that the prisoner had fairly stated what occurred between them. He excused his conduct by affirming in a solemn manner that he "said or did nothing more than what the King commanded him to do." And then, as counsel, as well as witness for the Crown, he argued that, assuming the statement to be correct, it was no discharge in law against his Highness the King for a direct violation of the statute.

⁹ Burnet asserts, in variance with recorded facts, that "no Catholic was ever punished for merely denying the Royal Supremacy in official examinations;" but the communication between Bishop Fisher and Maister Rich was "private." Mr. Froude considers his oracle "mistaken in this matter."

Lord Andley and the other judges were of opinion that this message or promise from the King neither did nor could by rigour of law discharge the prisoner from the crime ; but in so declaring his mind and conscience against the Supremacy—yea, though it were at the King's own request or command—he committed treason by the statute, and nothing could save him from death but the King's merciful pardon.

Dr. Fisher then contended that as the statute only made it treason “maliciously” to deny the King's Supremacy, he could not be guilty by merely expressing an opinion to the King himself; and that too by his Highness's own order.

Audley replied in a “malicious tone,” that “malice did not mean spite or ill-will in the vulgar sense, but was an inference of law, for if a man speak against the King's Supremacy by any manner of means, that speaking is to be understood and taken in law as malice.”

Bishop Fisher raised another important question—namely, that in high treason accusations the law required two witnesses ; whilst the Crown produced only *one* in his case; and that one under the most discreditable circumstances that ever dishonoured a court of justice¹. This puzzling point was quickly overruled by Audley, who replied that as this was a case in which the King's Highness was personally concerned the law requiring two witnesses did not, in his opinion, apply ! He then addressed the jury for the Crown in a speech which has been described as a “literal perversion of law, equity,

¹ Mr. Froude coolly says, “the King's Counsel might have produced other witnesses had they cared to do so.” Of course they could : there was any amount of testimony then available, either from fear or avarice.

and truth." His manner too was gross, insolent, and overbearing.

After a brief time of seeming deliberation, the jury returned a verdict of guilty, to which the Bishop replied—"I thank you heartily, Maister Jurymen, for your verdict; and may the Almighty God forgive you and those at whose bidding you have outraged truth and justice!"

Lord Audley then, "assuming a solemn appearance," said:—"John Fisher, you shall be led to the place from whence you came, and from thence again shall be drawn through the city to the place of execution at Tyburn, where your body shall be hanged by the neck; half alive you shall be cut down and thrown to the ground, your bowels to be taken out of your body before you, being still alive, your head to be smitten off, and your body to be divided into four quarters, and afterwards your head and quarters to be set up wheresoever the King shall appoint. And God have mercy upon your soul!" (Bayley, p. 198.)

Dr. Fisher then addressed the Commissioners, protesting against the injustice of the proceedings against him, and concluded in these words:—"My lords, I am here condemned before you of high treason for denial of the King's Supremacy over the Church of God; but by what order of justice I leave to God who is the searcher both of the King's conscience and of yours. Nevertheless, I have been found guilty (as it is termed), and must be contented with all that God shall send, to whose will I wholly refer and submit myself. And now I tell you more plainly my mind concerning this matter of the King's Supremacy. I think indeed, and I have always thought, and do now lastly affirm, that his

Highness the King cannot justly claim any such supremacy over the Church of God as he now taketh upon him. Neither hath it ever been or heard of any temporal prince before his day aspiring to that dignity. Wherefore if the King will now adventure himself in proceeding in this strange and extraordinary case, no doubt but he shall deeply incur the grievous displeasure of the Almighty God, to the great damage of his own soul and of many others, and to the utter ruin of this realm committed to his charge, whereof will ensue some sharp punishment at the hand of God. I pray God His Highness may remember himself in time and hearken to good counsel, for the preservation of himself and his kingdom, and the peace of all Christendom."

Griffin, who was present, states that the public were not permitted to hear the above speech. It made (he says) no impression on the Commissioners or Judges, who all sided with the King. "Lord Wiltshire and Maister Crumwel were smiling and looking one at the other; and the great Chancellor's face became mighty solemn like unto a confessor with a big sinner."

Amidst a great parade of halbert men, executioners, and jail attendants in their various liveries, the condemned prelate was re-conducted to the Tower. The lamentations of the populace, especially the crowds who came from Rochester, much affected him. At the Tower gate he thanked the officials for their attendance. "I thank you" (he said) "for the labour and pains you have taken with me this day; I am not able to give you any recompense; for all has been taken from me, and I am as poor as Lazarus. Therefore I pray you to accept of the only thing I can give you—my thanks and good wishes."

The few days of life now allotted to Dr. Fisher were

chiefly occupied in prayer. Nevertheless, he was cheerful and pleasant: he asked the cook for his dinner, and the former stated that he had "prepared none that day, because he had heard it rumoured that his lordship's head had been chopped off on yonder hill, and therefore he would not want a dinner." "Well," said the bishop, "my good cook, you see I am still alive, and am very hungry just now; whatever you hear of me let me no more lack my dinner, but make it ready as thou art wont to do, and if thou seest me dead when thou comest, why then eat it thyself; but if I am alive I mind, by God's grace, to eat never a bit the less."

"In stature," (says Bayley²) "Dr. Fisher was tall and comely; exceeding the middle sort of men; for he was to the quantity of six feet in height; and being very slender and lean was nevertheless upright and well formed, straight-backed, big jaws, and strongly sinewed; his hair by nature black, though in his latter days through age and imprisonment, turned to white; his eyes large and round, neither full black nor full grey, but of a mixt colour between both, his forehead smooth and large, his nose of a good and even proportion; somewhat wide mouth and big jawed, as one ordained by nature to utter much speech, wherein was notwithstanding a certain comeliness, his skin somewhat tawny, mixed with many blue veins; his face, hands, &c., all his body so bare of flesh, as is almost incredible, which came by the great abstinence and penance he used upon himself for many years—even from his youth. In speech he was mild, temperate, and kindly."

Those who approached Dr. Fisher at this juncture,

² The real name of this author was Dr. Hall, of Cambridge. He died Canon of St. Omer's, in 1604.

were struck with his heroic fortitude and piety; he expressed something kind and endearing to all—even the executioners. On the morning of his death he asked the Lieutenant of the Tower to indulge him with a sleep of two hours longer,” adding, “I have been coughing half the night; I could not sleep, I am very weak; but, remember, my weakness does not proceed from fear. Thank God, I have nothing to fear in meeting death.” At seven o’clock he arose, and dressed with more than ordinary care. “This is our wedding day,” he observed, “and it behoves us, therefore, to use more cleanliness in preparing for the marriage table.” At nine of the clock a procession was formed, headed by the Lieutenant of the Tower; the venerable prisoner was so weak that he had to be carried in a chair to the place of execution, to which—as the “King’s mercy” had changed the brutal sentence at Tyburn to decapitation on Tower Hill—the distance was short. In one hand the bishop held the crucifix, in the other, a copy of the New Testament. Having reached the scaffold he seemed to have received renewed strength. The executioner made his usual address, “begging forgiveness,” &c., to which the bishop replied, “I forgive you very heartily, and I hope you will see me overcome this storm lustily.” When his gown and tippet had been removed, “he stood in his doublet and hose in the sight of the multitude; and they marvelled to see a long, lean, and slender body, having on it little other substance besides skin and bones, insomuch as most part of the beholders wondered to see a living man so consumed, as he was the image of death itself; and the people thought it mighty cruel for the King to put such a man to death, he being so near his end³.”

³ Bayley’s Life of Bishop Fisher.

Notwithstanding the death-like appearance of Dr. Fisher, his mind was still vigorous, and he addressed the populace in a clear and audible tone. Coming to the front of the scaffold he said, "Christian people, I am come hither to die for the faith of Christ's holy Catholic Church; and I thank God hitherto my stomach hath served me very well thereunto, so that yet I have not feared death. Wherefore, I desire you all to help and assist with your prayers, that at the very point and instant of death's stroke, I may in that very moment stand steadfast without fainting in any one point of the Catholic faith, free from any fear. And I beseech the Almighty God of His infinite goodness and mercy to save the King and this realm, and that it may please Him to hold his hand over it and send the King's Highness good counsel." And then opening the "New Testament," his eye rested on these words: "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent. I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." Upon this the Bishop closed the book, saying, "Here is learning enough for me to my life's end,"

Having engaged about ten minutes in prayer, he rose from his knees, and looking towards the East said, "The sun shines upon the scene about to be enacted." Then, surveying the vast crowd with compressed lips, he made the sign of the cross with great solemnity, and surrendered himself to the executioners; his eyes were bandaged; an awful silence pervaded the multitude; he laid his head upon the block; a murmur thrilled amongst the on-lookers, and the throbbings of their hearts became painful; two minutes and ten seconds

had passed, a signal was given, and at one blow the executioner severed the head of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, from the body. "The populace" (writes a spectator, whose words we modernise) "stood horrified ; a hoarse sound of grief and terror arose from the men, followed by the wild shrieks of the women of Rochester, domestics, old retainers, pensioners and friends. The whole scene was one the like of which England had never seen before." Another writer says, "The people were astonished to see so much blood flowing from so lean a body." Bayley states that the executioner put the head in a bag, intending to place it on London Bridge that night, as he was commanded to do ; but the Queen (Anna Boleyn) wished particularly to see the head "before it was spiked ;" that it was "carried to her," and looking at it for some time she said, "Is this the head that so often exclaimed against me ? I trust it shall never do me more harm." "The Queen (states Bayley) struck it upon the mouth with the back of her hand, and hurt one of her fingers by a tooth that stuck somewhat more out than the rest did, which finger afterwards grew sore and put her to pain for many days ; and when cured, the mark of the tooth remained to be seen on the said finger." Henry Griffin, of Rochester, who was present at the execution, states that the headsman carried away the head in a "white bag," but makes no allusion to this shocking anecdote respecting Anna Boleyn. If such a thing occurred it is possible he would have heard of it. Judging, however, by the vindictive feeling with which Anna Boleyn pursued every person who espoused the cause of Queen Katherine, it would be hardly unjust to say that she was capable of such an action. Henry himself accused her of being

the cause of Sir Thomas More's judicial murder; and the reader is aware that Wolsey had described her as the night-crow who haunted his path, and pursued him to his fall. Fisher was well-known to have been an uncompromising opponent of the divorce of Queen Katherine. There is, therefore, some ground for believing this story to be correct.

Another revolting spectacle was that of the body of the bishop being stripped naked by the executioners, and remaining in that condition on the scaffold guarded by brutal and drunken halbert-men until night, when an order came from the Lords Commissioners—or rather from Cromwell himself—that the body was to be “immediately buried.” Accordingly “two of the watchers took the corpse upon halberts between them, and so carried it to a churchyard hard by, called ‘Barking’” (on the north side of the modern Tower-street), where on the north side of the churchyard by the wall they dug a grave or hole with their halberts, and therein, without any reverence, “tumbled the body of the goodly old prelate, all naked, and flat upon his stomach, without either shirt or other accustomed thing belonging to a Christian man's burial, and so covered the body with earth. And this was all the funeral and rites which the Bishop of Rochester received.” (Bayley.)

Three days later, Dr. Fisher's head was “spiked” on London Bridge, beside the heads of the Carthusian Fathers, who suffered a short time previously in the same cause. Immense crowds of people came daily to look at the bishop's head; some prayed, and others cursed the King and Cromwell. In fact, the public feeling was one of intense indignation against the King and his Council; the bridge itself, and every avenue

leading to it, was completely blocked up, and business almost suspended; so that, after fourteen days, Lord Cromwell ordered the "head to be thrown into the Thames by night." Charles the Fifth sent for the English ambassador, Sir Thomas Eliot, and told him that Bishop Fisher was "such a man for all purposes that the King of England had not the like of him in his realms; neither was he to be matched throughout Christendom." And then, with much feeling, the Emperor added, "Alas! your master hath, in killing that goodly bishop, killed at one blow all the bishops in your England." Francis, the French king, informed Sir John Wallop, the English ambassador in Paris, that "his royal master must have a very hard heart indeed, to put to death such a virtuous and good prelate as the Bishop of Rochester." The execution of Fisher was the topic of conversation in every city and university in Europe; and there seemed to have been but one opinion on the subject—namely, that King Henry was a monster who "dishonoured the name of monarch." Fisher's quaint biographer, Dr. Bayley, relates that "in all things belonging to the care and charge of a true bishop, he was to all the bishops of England living in his days the very mirror and lantern of light." "He pressed, as it were (says Fuller) into the other world, and expired in constancy and greatness." "He was one of the most worthy men on the side he espoused," says Sharon Turner—a marvellous admission from such a quarter. The latest writer on this period, the Rev. Mr. Blunt, observes that "the good old man's death was worthy of him, and of the Master in whose footsteps he was humbly travelling, while he felt for a Light whose brightness he did not altogether see on this side of the

grave." Mr. Froude, who defends the deeds of Henry and his Council, as essential to the ultimate success of the Reformation, whilst carefully ignoring the wicked means used to compass Fisher's death, becomes dramatic over the closing scene: "After a few prayers he knelt down and meekly laid his head upon a pillow, where neither care, nor fear, nor sickness, would ever visit more. Many a spectacle of sorrow had been witnessed on that tragic spot, but never one more sad than this. Let us close our lips, and not speak of it."

Dr. Fisher was not what the world would call a "great personage;" but he was that which no sectarian prejudice, no sentiment that acknowledges virtue can deny—a good and holy Christian, and a just man. He had few equals in the long roll of English prelates; he used no weapons to enforce his convictions but those supplied from the armoury of prayer and kindly counsel. His execution was the first deadly sin in the terrible calendar of judicial murders in England. Although the Carthusians had been favoured with the semblance of a trial, Fisher's case was the first which proved that the highest officials and attributes of the law were merely the preliminary instruments of legal assassination. (See Hall, Hollinshed, Stowe, Baker, Thorndale, Griffin, Burnet, Rapin, and Hume.)

SIR THOMAS MORE.

THE next name on the list of English martyrs stands that of Sir Thomas More. As the King's policy was becoming gradually developed, the conscientious Chancellor considered he could no longer hold office; and though possessed of but a small patrimony, he had no hesitation in surrendering large emoluments and the splendour of his position. He therefore resigned the

Great Seal, to the evident disappointment of the King, and was succeeded by Sir Thomas Audley. The "Royal Supremacy" was the question upon which the King and his Council were determined to test the opinions of More. The new policy was delicately hinted by Audley, but cautiously evaded by the ex-Chancellor, who foresaw what would soon follow, yet nevertheless had no hesitation or wavering as to the course he should pursue when conscience was at stake.

"He descended from his high station" (writes Hume) "with more joy and alacrity than he had mounted up to it. The austerity of his virtue and the sanctity of his manners had no wise encroached on the gentleness of his temper, nor even diminished that frolic and gaiety to which he was naturally inclined. He sported with all the varieties of fortune into which he was thrown; and neither the pride naturally attending a high station, nor the melancholy, incident to poverty and retreat, could ever lay hold of his serene and equal spirit. While his family discovered symptoms of sorrow on laying down the grandeur and magnificence to which they had been accustomed, he drew a subject of mirth from their distresses; and made them ashamed of losing even a moment's cheerfulness on account of such trivial misfortunes."

It has been stated upon the authority of John Foxe that Sir Thomas More was "a cruel persecutor of the Reformers; and caused even little boys to be flogged because they adopted Protestant principles." Speed, Burnet, and Hume have all "improved" Foxe's relation. More's house at Chelsea has been represented as an "inquisition jail," and the amiable Chancellor "acting the part of a grand inquisitor;" that there was a large tree in his garden where the Reformers and

other faithful soldiers of Christ underwent cruel whipping, and that, too, under the especial superintendence of Sir Thomas More himself." Some of the leading Reformers, however, describe Sir Thomas More as a man of unquestionable truth, candour, and honour. Here is More's own version of the narrative originally furnished to Foxe: "Divers of them" (says More) "have said that of such as were in my house when I was Chancellor, I used to examine them with torments, causing them to be bound to a tree in my garden, and there piteously beaten. Except their safe-keeping, I never else did cause any such thing to be done unto any of the heretics in all my life, except only twain; one was a child and a servant of mine in my own house, whom his father before he came to me had mixed up in such matters, and set his boy to attend upon George Jay. This Jay did teach the child his own grievous heresy against the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar; which heresy this child, in my house, began to teach another child. And upon that point I caused a servant of mine to strip him like a child before my household, for amendment of himself and example to others. Another was one, who after he had fallen into these frantic heresies, soon fell into plain open frenzy; albeit that he had been in Bedlam, and afterwards by beating and correcting gathered his remembrance. Being therefore let at liberty, his old perversions fell again into his head. Being informed of his relapse I caused him to be taken by the constables and bounden to a tree in the streets, before the whole town, and then striped him till he waxed weary. Verily, God be thanked, I hear no harm of him now. And of all who ever came into my hand for heresy, so help me God,

else had never any of them a stripe or stroke given them, so much as a fillip in the forehead.”

Alarmed at the progress of the Reformation, and shocked by the conduct of many of its most zealous apostles in Germany, More became determined to discourage what was then styled the “new learning,” by every legitimate means. He “never strained or rigorously enforced the law against the Reformers.” “It is” (observes Erasmus) “a sufficient proof of his clemency, that, while he was Lord Chancellor of England, no man was put to death for these pestilent dogmas, while so many at the same period suffered for them in France, Germany, and the Netherlands.” He was present many times at the examination of persons charged with heresy, and concurred with the Council in sending them to prison; but he could adopt no other course, unless he violated the existing law on the subject, which was one of the King’s favourite statutes. It was not till he had resigned the Great Seal, and was succeeded by the “pliant and inhuman Audley,” that heresy was made high treason and the scaffold flooded with innocent blood⁴. Yet Audley was afterwards the earnest supporter of the Reformation wherever or whenever it suited his interests. As the colleague of Cromwell and Cranmer, he carried out the wicked schemes devised by a cruel and capricious King against the lives and the property of his subjects.

From his own great rectitude, honesty, and piety, Sir Thomas More entertained a horror for every kind of vice. He sometimes punished depraved criminals severely; but where he could perceive any feeling of

⁴ Lord Campbell’s “Lives of the English Chancellors,” vol. i. p. 548.

repentance, he acted in an opposite spirit; never approving of the sanguinary criminal code then in existence, he was consequently on the side of clemency. "He was," writes Lord Campbell, "three centuries in advance of his age." A passage in his "*Utopia*" is illustrative of his real opinions on the cruelty and injustice to which the people were subjected by the existing statutes of England. He represents his observant traveller who had visited Utopia, and describes its institutions, as saying, "There happened to be at table an English lawyer, who took occasion to run out in high commendation of the severe execution of thieves in his country, where might be seen twenty at a time dangling from one gibbet. Nevertheless, he observed, it puzzled him to understand, since so few escaped, there were yet so many thieves left who were still found robbing in all places. Upon this I said with boldness, there was no reason to wonder at the matter, since this way of punishing thieves was neither just in itself nor for the public good; for, as the severity was too great, so the remedy was not effectual; simple theft was not so great a crime that it ought to cost a man his life; and no punishment would restrain men from robbing who could find no other way of livelihood."

When More was committed to the Tower the Lieutenant apologized to him for the "poor cheer the place furnished for prisoners;" to which More replied, "Good maister, assure yourself I do not mistake the cheer, but whenever I do, then spare not to thrust me out of your doors." For one month he was not permitted to see his wife or daughter, on whom he impressed the solemn obligation of not repining for him; declaring that he had violated no law, and could never acknowledge the

King as "Christ's vicar on earth." The Duke of Norfolk, Cromwell, and other members of the Council were sent to "remonstrate with him;" and, after them, Cranmer, who professed to argue the merits of the Supremacy Statute with him. The Archbishop, however, failed to convince, and only demonstrated by his manner that he was a personal enemy. Almost every day commissioners or spies visited More; but, being an astute lawyer, he did not commit himself by any unguarded expression. ("Roper's Life of Sir T. More.")

On one occasion, when his noble daughter, Margaret Roper, came to visit him, the Carthusian Abbot of Sion, and three of his brethren of the Charter House, were "marched by on their way to execution for not accepting the Supremacy oath," when More suddenly exclaimed—"Lo! dost thou not see, Meg, that these blessed fathers be now so cheerfully going to their death as bridegrooms to their marriage?" He then hinted to her that a like destiny awaited himself. His daughter wished him to "yield to the King in some way." He wrote to her a letter of rebuke, and concluded with an assurance that "none of the terrible things that might happen to him touched him so near, or bore so grievously on him, as that his dearly beloved child whose judgment he so much valued, should labour to persuade him to do what would be contrary to his conscience. The good daughter's reply was worthy of her parent. She submits reverently to his "faithful and delectable letter as the faithful messenger of his virtuous soul," and rejoiced at "the philosophic grandeur of his mind under such trials." She concluded in these words:—"Your own most loving obedient daughter and bedeswoman, Margaret Roper, who desireth above all earthly things to bear John

Wood's stede, to do you some service⁵." When Mrs. More visited her husband she "scolded him severely for his foolery in being there at all." The poor lady was sadly distressed at this time. In mental powers she was vastly inferior to her illustrious husband. She was a "plain housewife," destitute of ambition, and "devoid of all heroic qualities." A woman of the world on a small scale, her family was her universe. She cared nothing for the respective claims of the dignified lady of Arragon or her fascinating rival; she had heard of the greatness of Wolsey and other prelates and statesmen; yet she knew not in what their greatness consisted; she looked upon Cranmer as a "schoolmaster" who had "winning ways;" she thought Fisher was too honest for the times; and Gardiner and Bonner were sensible men because they pleased the King. She had enjoyed a cheerful and a happy home—a contented husband, and loving children. No wonder that her mind became embittered, and that she appeared rude and ungracious in manner. Here is the scene at the Tower between the "rude housewife," as she has been described, and her learned and witty husband. "Ah, Maister More, I marvel that you who have hitherto always been taken for a wise man, will now so play the fool as to lie here in this close filthy prison, and be content to be shut up thus with mice and rats as your companions, when you might be abroad at your liberty, with the favour both of the King and his Council. . . . I muse what in God's name you mean here thus fondly to tarry?" Having heard his wife's discourse to an end, Sir Thomas, in his usual good humour, said, "I

⁵ John Wood was an old and faithful servant, whom Cromwell permitted to accompany his master to the Tower.

pray thee, good Mistress Alice, tell me one thing.” “What is it?” said she. “Is not this house as near to heaven as my own?” The “housewife” still maintained her views, and the husband was unable to convince her that it was better to remain in the Tower than to dishonour himself by accepting liberty at the sacrifice of what he considered the highest and holiest principles. But when the dark hour came “Mrs. Alice” proved herself to be a true woman and wife. She was compelled by necessity to sell her wearing apparel to provide food for her husband, but recently the Chancellor of a great kingdom, then wasting away his life in a damp dungeon in the Tower amidst “mice and rats.” “Mrs. Alice” was, however, cheered on in her labour of love by her amiable children; and they all now looked on their poverty, under such circumstances, as a necessary offering at the shrine of truth and virtue.

More’s first wife died six years after his union, leaving him four children—one son and three daughters. It was chiefly to provide for the care of his family that he entered on a second marriage. Alice Middleton, his second wife, was a widow seven years his senior. His grandson says she was a woman who could not “hearten” any man. “She possessed neither wealth, beauty, nor good temper; and to add to these deficiencies, she was a mere common-place housewife, but nevertheless a good kind of matron.” Strange companion for such a man; yet the good Chancellor agreed well with her.

The most disgraceful of the many schemes used to adduce evidence against Sir Thomas More was that of sending Maister Rich to visit him in the Tower. Rich was created Solicitor-General, from the fact, that at the English bar—low as it was in morality and honour

at that period—there was, perhaps, not another man who would stoop to the same infamy to promote the policy of the King and his Council. Fortified by an order of the Council, Maister Rich, accompanied by Sir Richard Southwell and Mr. Palmer, went to the Tower for the ostensible purpose of depriving More of the few books with which he had hitherto been permitted to sooth his hours of solitude. While they were packing up the books, Rich, under the pretence of “old friendship,” fell into conversation with More; and in a familiar and confidential tone, after a compliment to his wisdom and learning, put a case to him. “Admit (said Rich) that there were an Act of Parliament made, that all the realm should take me for a King, would not you, Sir Thomas, take me for King?” “Yes, Sir,” said More, “that I would.” Rich became much elated, and put the case further. “Suppose that there was an Act of Parliament that all the realm should take me for Pope, would you not then take me for Pope?” “For answer,” said Sir Thomas, “to your first case—the Parliament may well meddle with the state of temporal Princes; but to make answer to your other case—suppose the Parliament should make a law that God should not be God, would you then, Maister Rich, say so?” “No, Sir,” said Rich, “that I would not; for no Parliament could make such a law.” Sir Thomas More now suspecting that some dark plot against him was at the bottom of this discourse, made no further observation on the questions raised. On his departure Rich took leave of his “old friend,” as he styled him, in an apparently kind manner, “assuring him of the regard he entertained for him and hoping that all would end well.”

On the 7th of May, 1534, Sir Thomas More was

arraigned in the Court of King's Bench ; but the trial was postponed till the 1st of July, to enable the Crown to "procure further evidence." When the trial was finally arranged, More was compelled to walk from the Tower to Westminster, clothed as a malefactor, before the gaze of a multitude of people. The colour of his hair, which had become grey since he last appeared in public ; his face, which though still cheerful was pale and emaciated ; his bent posture, and his feeble steps which he was obliged to support with a staff, showed the rigour of his confinement, and excited the fervent sympathy of the people, instead of impressing them, as was intended, with a dread of the King's vengeance. His presence in the King's Bench as a prisoner for high treason awoke the bright memories of his past career, when in that court, arrayed in the robes of the Lord Chancellor of England, he had knelt at the feet of his venerable father, then the Lord Chief Justice, to ask his blessing before he entered his own court to adjudicate as Chancellor. Very many of the spectators at the trial had witnessed those scenes between the father and the son ; and a general feeling of sorrow and of indignation was perceptible in every face ; the King's Council being well aware that they were engaged in an unpopular prosecution, and that public opinion was against them, Cromwell made preparations to crush any movement of the populace. "I know," said he, "how to make the swinish multitude become tame." His ill-favoured and fearless presence struck terror in the people's hearts⁶. "After the lapse

⁶ "Hang them up ! hang them up !" so frequently uttered in a ferocious tone by Henry, was first suggested by Cromwell, as a means of striking terror into the populace. Perhaps it was Cromwell who originated the term for the people, which has been so often misused.

of three centuries" (says Lord Campbell), "during which, statesmen, prelates, and kings have been unjustly brought to trial in this same court—considering the splendour of More's talents, the greatness of his acquirements, and the innocence of his life, we must still regard his murder as the blackest crime that has ever been perpetrated in England under the forms of law." Sir Christopher Hale as Attorney-General conducted the trial, aided by Maister Rich, the Solicitor-General. When the frivolous indictment was read, Lord Chancellor Audley, addressing the prisoner, said, "You see, prisoner, how grievously you have offended the King's Highness, yet he is so good and so merciful, that if you will lay aside your obstinacy and change your opinions, we hope you may obtain pardon." Sir Thomas More replied, "Most noble lords, I have great cause to thank you for this your courtesy; but I beseech the Almighty God that I may continue in the mind I am in until my death." The charges against him were substantially reduced to one—namely "Attempting to deprive the King of his title and dignity." This accusation was unsupported by evidence. His alleged treasonable letters to Bishop Fisher were not proved, on the ground that they had been destroyed. Judging from the "legal position" of the case at this juncture, it was Sir Thomas Audley's duty to direct the jury to return a verdict of "not guilty." He, however, called upon the prisoner for his defence. "A deep silence now prevailed—all present held their breath—every eye was fixed upon the victim." Sir Thomas More was beginning by expressing his apprehension "lest his memory and wit being damaged with his health of body through his long confinement,

he should not be able properly to meet all the matters alleged against him." When he found that he was unable to support himself by his staff, his judges evinced a touch of humanity by ordering him a chair. When he was seated, after a few preliminary observations he considered the charges against him in their order. "As to the King's marriage," he said, "I confess that I always told his Highness my opinion thereon as my conscience pointed out to me, which I neither would nor ought to have concealed. I do not consider it to be high treason to give my opinion on the subject where the King sought that opinion from me as his councillor. I should have basely flattered him if I had not uttered the whole truth unto his Highness. As to the letters to Bishop Fisher, the King himself stated the contents of them, and showed that they were free from blame." On the charge that he had declined to declare his opinion, when interrogated respecting the supremacy, he answered "that he could not transgress any law or incur any crime of treason, by holding his peace; God alone being judge of our secret thoughts." The Attorney-General interposed, with much rudeness of manner, saying, "Maister More, although we had not one word or deed to assert against you, yet have we not your silence, when asked whether you acknowledged the King to be the Supreme Head of Christ's Church on earth, which is an evident sign of a malicious mind in you?" More, however, reminded the Crown lawyers of the maxim among canonists and citizens, "*Qui tacet consentire videtur.*" As to the last charge Sir Thomas More argued that the only proof was his saying that "the Statute of Supremacy was a two-edged sword," which was interpreted as his reason for de-

clining to answer, and could not be construed into a positive denial of the King's supremacy. He concluded his defence by solemnly declaring that he had "never spoken a word against the Supremacy Act to any living man."

The jury were of opinion that there was no evidence before them to convict the prisoner of high treason. They hesitated, and seemed for a few minutes to disregard the unmistakeable looks and gestures of the judges and the Attorney-General. But the suspense was soon removed by the appearance of a new witness in the person of the Solicitor-General. Maister Rich, "having been duly sworn," made a statement as to the "confidential conversation" which he had with the prisoner in the Tower on the removal of the books, when Rich raised a question, as the reader is aware, touching the supremacy law and asked More's opinion of the statute.

Every honourable man in court—apart from the judges and prosecutors—felt horrified at the conduct of the Solicitor-General and the Chief Commissioners who permitted it. The suppressed murmur, however, subsided when Sir Thomas More rose, throwing aside his staff, and, with renewed vigour of mind and body, commenced his reply to the allegations of Rich:—"My lords, if I were a man that did not regard an oath I would not at this time stand here in the way I do before you. If the oath which you have taken, Maister Rich, be true, then I pray I never see God in the face; which I would not say, were it otherwise, to gain the whole world." Having related the conversation with Rich, he continued, "In good faith, Maister Rich, I am more sad for your perjury than for my own peril.

Know you that neither I, nor any man else to my knowledge, ever took you to be a man of such credit as either I or any other would vouchsafe to communicate with you on any matter of importance. As you well know, I have been acquainted with your manner of life and conversation for a long time, even from your youth upwards; for we dwelt in the same parish many years, and you were always considered very light in your tongue, a great dicer, a gamester, and—and not of any commendable or virtuous name in the Temple or elsewhere.” And then addressing Audley and the judges, he said, “Can it, therefore, seem likely to your lordships that in a case of such magnitude, I should so unadvisedly overshoot myself as to trust Maister Rich—a man always reputed to be possessed of little truth or honesty?” Sir Thomas More continued his address for some time, and argued his case with all his wonted ability and with the energy of conscious rectitude. He made a deep impression on the spectators, and even Cromwell’s carefully selected jury were again “bewildered at the turn the trial took.” At this juncture Rich felt alarmed, and produced Southwell and Palmer, who accompanied him to the Tower, in order that they might corroborate his statements; but those gentlemen declined giving any evidence; declaring that they did not listen to the “confidential conversation” which passed between Rich and More. If Maister Rich presented a bold and shameless front at this moment, the Chancellor was his superior in the strength of unblushing audacity—at once regardless of the honour of the ermine and the truth and equity that should characterise the office of a judge. Sir Thomas Audley, as the Lord Chancellor of England, charged

the jury. After complimenting the Crown lawyers on the "ability and impartiality" with which they had conducted the case, he proceeded to dwell on the enormity of the offences charged against the prisoner; the danger to the King's Highness, and the tranquillity of the kingdom by the course followed by the prisoner. He defended the conduct of Maister Rich, stating that he gave his evidence with delicacy and reluctance, and from the most loyal and the most pure motives; that his testimony stood uncontradicted if not corroborated, as the denial of the prisoner could not of course be taken into account; that as the words related by Maister Rich undoubtedly expressed the real sentiments of the prisoner, and were only abiding a necessary inference, there was every probability that it was spoken. If the jury, therefore, believed what Maister Rich related to them, then the case for the King's Highness was established against the prisoner."

The jury retired, and returned into court in twenty minutes, declaring "Sir Thomas More guilty of high treason against his Highness the King."

Sir Thomas Audley could not repress his too apparent pleasure at the verdict so recorded, and immediately proceeded to pass sentence of death, but was interrupted by Sir Thomas More. "My lords," said he, "when I was a judge, it was the custom to ask the prisoner before sentence, whether he could give any reason why judgment should not proceed against him." Sir Thomas Audley became excited, and admitted he had made a mistake. The question was then put. Sir Thomas More, in his reply, denied the power of Parliament to pass the statute transferring the Headship of the Church from the Pope of Rome to the King of England. He

took exception to the framing of the indictment, and the manner in which the trial was conducted. But the judges were unanimous in their approval of the verdict, and Chancellor Audley pronounced sentence of death, "ordering that, after the head was cut off, the body should be made four quarters of, and set over four gates of the city, and the head to be placed upon London Bridge."

Sir Thomas again addressed the court, and now more freely expressed his opinions on the Supremacy Act. He said that after having "studied the question for seven years, he could not discover by what possible means, or argument, or law, a layman could become the Head of the Church. It appeared to him quite impossible." Sir Thomas Audley asked him if he was wiser than all the learned men of Europe. More replied, "That, with very few exceptions, the learned men of Christendom were just of his way of thinking on this great question." Sir John Fitz-James inquired if the prisoner had any thing more to add? After a pause, Sir Thomas proceeded: "As the blessed Apostle, St. Paul, was present and consenting to the death of the proto-martyr, St. Stephen, keeping their clothes that stoned him to death, and yet they be now twain holy saints in Heaven, and there shall continue friends for ever; so I verily trust, and shall therefore heartily pray, that though your lordships have been on earth my judges to condemnation, yet that we may hereafter meet in heaven merrily together to our everlasting salvation; and now, my lords, I heartily say, 'May God preserve you all—especially my sovereign lord, the King; and grant him faithful counsellors.'"

When Sir Thomas resumed his seat a profound silence

ensued; and after a few minutes he rose again, and looking earnestly round the court, bowed to the judges, commissioners, and bar. He then took his departure for the Tower, with the headsman walking before him. Near the gates of the old fortress a painful incident occurred. His beloved daughter, Margaret Roper, rushed through the crowd, and, pushing aside the halbert-men, "threw herself upon her father's neck and kissed him repeatedly—not able to speak, not able to cry." "And," writes a spectator, "this scene made the hearts of the very halbert-men full of grief; anon, she did speak, and the tears rolled down her face, when she said, 'Oh, my father! Oh, my father! are you going to leave us? Are they so wicked as to take your life?' The father replied, that his daughter should submit to the will of God and pray for his enemies. She again clasped him in her arms, exclaiming, 'Dear loved father, your blessing again!'" "After this farewell, he felt that the bitterness of death was over, and he awaited the execution of his sentence with cheerfulness⁷."

The court party now used every effort to induce Sir Thomas More to "make a recantation" of his opinions on the Supremacy Law; but he "continued obstinate." The warrant was then issued for his execution. Having been informed that the "King was pleased to remit the severe parts of the sentence, and to be *merely* beheaded," he expressed a hope that none of his friends might experience the like mercy from his Highness the King.

The day before his execution he wrote with a piece of coal (pen and ink being prohibited) a parting letter to his daughter, Margaret Roper, containing farewell

⁷ Condensed from Lord Campbell's "English Chancellors."

blessings to all his children, and even to his domestics. Adverting to their last interview, he says: "I never liked your manner towards me better than when you kissed me last, for I am most pleased when your daughterly love and dear charity have no leisure to look to worldly courtesy." At an early hour on the morning of Tuesday (July 6th, 1535), he received intelligence from Sir Thomas Pope, that it was the "King's command that he should die before nine o'clock that morning." He was further requested to "make no speech to the people." He expressed his thanks for the "good tidings," and said he should obey the King's command. He begged one favour—namely, that his daughter Margaret might be present at his funeral, to which Pope replied, "The King is willing that your wife, children, and near friends may be present at your funeral." (Roper's "Life of Sir T. More.")

In two hours after this interview with Sir Thomas Pope, the procession to the scaffold was formed. In his hand More "carried a red cross, and his looks were raised towards Heaven." As he passed along, the wife of a wine-merchant pressed through the crowd and offered him a goblet of wine. He gently refused, saying, "Christ at the time of His Passion drank no wine, but vinegar and gall." He was next addressed by Mistress Rachel Childe, who rudely demanded some law papers she had given him to examine into her case when he was Chancellor. He replied, "Good Mistress Rachel, in an hour hence his Highness the King will rid me of the care I have had of thy papers." Another woman charged him with having given an unjust judgment against her. "I mind you well," he answered with much firmness; "and were I again to give sen-

tence in your cause, I would not alter a word." A mob was retained by the Boleyn party to deride and insult him as he passed along to the scaffold. The conduct of the lower classes on this occasion was, according to Griffin, "brutal and disgraceful;" yet there were many edifying exceptions: "wives, children, and maidens," stood forth upon the highway waving the cross and other emblems of religion. A citizen of Winchester threw himself at his feet, and asked his prayers. "Go," said Sir Thomas, "and pray for me awhile, and when that while is gone, I hope to be able to pray for you in heaven."

When More reached the fatal platform a murmur issued from the crowd, whom he surveyed for some minutes. The sight of the late Lord Chancellor in such a position struck almost all present with horror, for there was an earnest popular opinion of his exalted virtues, his rectitude, and amiability. Having knelt in prayer for a short time, he rose, and, addressing the chief headsman in an air of pleasantry, handed him an angel in gold, and said, "Pluck up thy spirit, man, and be not afraid to do thy office; my neck is very short; take heed, therefore, that thou strike not awry for saving thy honesty." When he had laid his head on the block, he desired the executioner "to wait till he had removed his beard, for *that* had never offended his Highness the King."

A signal was then given, and at one blow the head was severed from the body, and held up to the gaze of the horror-stricken people. In the course of the day the head was "spiked on a pole," and placed on London Bridge. The noble daughter subsequently received it, and preserved it as a "precious relic" during her life,

and in her dying hour ordered it to be laid with her in the same grave.

When the news of Sir Thomas More's execution reached the King he was playing at "Tables" with Queen Anna; he was apparently shocked, and turning his eyes upon her he said with truth, "Thou art the cause of this man's death." He immediately retired to his private room, and permitted no one to approach him. The next day he was in a different temper. If he felt any real sorrow or remorse at the recollection of the times when he put his arm round Sir Thomas More's neck in the garden at Chelsea, or was instructed by him on the motion of the heavenly bodies from the house-top, or was amused by his jests and innocent stories at the dinner-table or supper, the feeling was transitory indeed, for he not only placed the head of "his beloved friend" where it must have been conspicuous to his own eye, as he passed almost daily from Greenwich to Whitehall, but gave further evidence of his unforgiving vengeance by expelling the widow and orphans from their residence at Chelsea. He "did not leave Lady More," writes a contemporary, "a seat to sit upon, nor a blanket to cover her, and the family were reduced to destitution." The correspondence of Erasmus diffused a feeling of execration throughout Europe against Henry and his Council, and English ambassadors abroad were "looked upon as the agents of an inhuman monster." Amongst Lutherans, as well as "Papal and anti-Papal Catholics," there was an unanimous denunciation of the judicial murder of the "great, learned, and most worthy Englishman." Charles V. sent for Sir Thomas Smith, the English ambassador at his Court, and addressed

him as follows: "Sir Thomas, we understand that the King, your master, has put to death his wise councillor, Sir Thomas More." Sir Thomas Smith looked abashed, and pretended ignorance of what occurred. "Well," continued the Emperor, "it is true; and this we will say, that if he had been ours, we should sooner have lost the best city in our dominions than so worthy a Councillor^s."

It seems to have been the delight of Erasmus to introduce men of learning and wit to his friend. Amongst the "learned and witty" who visited the "happy home at Chelsea," were Edmund Bonner, Stephen Gardiner, Edward Foxe, and other notable churchmen. Cresacre, the grandson of More, has chronicled anecdotes of his humour. "He never laughed at his own witticisms, which flowed from him naturally and without an effort, but that he spoke them so gravely few could say whether he were in jest or earnest. Yet though he never left his mirth, his heart was ever humble and mortified, and all the while he exercised acts of self-denial which worldly men would have wondered at." Although Sir Thomas had corresponded with Erasmus he had not yet seen the great scholar, who, with the desire to give a surprise customary at the time, called upon the Chancellor without announcing himself. Sir Thomas was so delighted with the conversation and learning of his visitor, that he exclaimed, "You are either Erasmus or the devil!"

Collet informed Erasmus that in More's youth he was the greatest genius he knew of in England. Another contemporary states that he had many social peculiarities. "He had a habit of walking with his right shoulder higher than his left, from no known motive

^s "Memoirs of Charles V." "Letters of Sir Thomas Smith."

but a desire to be singular." Cranmer's opinion of him was unfavourable. "He thought Sir Thomas somewhat too conceited, and desirous of esteem; that he would never vary from what he had once expressed, whether wrong or right, because he thought a change of opinion would lessen his reputation." One of More's most endearing qualities was his warm friendship to those whom he selected for his intimacy, and he was formed by nature for social attachments. Reginald Pole declared in after life that he was prouder of the friendship of More and Fisher than that of all the great princes of Europe together. Cranvild states that he "would not exchange the acquaintance and sweet conversation and friendship of More for the wealth of Croesus;" on another occasion, the "witty Chancellor" told Cranvild that his "love and courtesy shook away sorrow from him." And he added, "I know no other remedy for the shortness of my friend's letters but to read them again and again." "I know (says Erasmus), my dear Sir Thomas," "that your delight is to be rich in faithful friends, and that in this you reckon to consist your greatest earthly happiness. For the delight which other men take in cards, dice, chess, hunting, and music, is less than what you find in intercourse with a learned and congenial companion. And so, though I know you are well stored with this kind of riches, yet because I know a covetous man can never have enough, and that this manner of dealing of mine has before now changed luckily both to you and to me, I deliver to your keeping one friend more, whom I would have you accept with your whole heart. As soon as you know him, I look to be thanked by you both, as I was by Cranvild, who now so possesses your love that I am well-nigh envious of him."

In writing to Peter Giles, of Antwerp, More describes his various occupations: "Whilst in pleading, in hearing, or deciding causes, or composing disputes as an arbitrator, in waiting on some men about business, and on others out of respect, the greater part of the day is spent on other men's affairs, the remainder of it must be given to my family at home, so that I can reserve no part of it to myself, that is, to study. I must gossip with my wife, and chat with my children, and find something to say to my servants; for all these things I reckon a part of my business, unless I were to become a stranger in my own house: for with whomsoever either nature or choice has engaged a man in any relation of life, he must endeavour to make himself as acceptable as he can. In such occupations, days, months, and years slip away; and what time, think you, is left for writing? without saying any thing of what is wasted in sleep and meals, which consume nearly half of our lives."

The discipline established in the family of More forms the subject of some observations of Erasmus. "With what gentleness," he observes, "does my friend regulate his household, where misunderstandings and quarrels are altogether unknown! Indeed, he is looked up to as a general healer of all differences, and was never known to part from any on terms of unkindness. His house seems to enjoy the peculiar happiness that all who dwell under its roof go forth into the world bettered in their morals, as well as improved in their own condition; and no spot was ever known to fall on the reputation of any of its fortunate inhabitants. Here you might imagine yourself in the Academy of Plato. But, indeed, I should do injustice to his house by comparing

it with the school of that philosopher, where nothing but abstract questions, and occasionally moral virtues, were the subjects of discussion ; it would be truer to call it a school of religion, and an arena for the exercise of all the Christian virtues. All its inmates apply themselves to liberal studies, though piety is their first care. No wrangling or angry word is ever heard within the walls. No one is idle ; every one does his duty with alacrity, and regularity and good order are prescribed by the mere force of courtesy and kindness. Every one performs his allotted task, and yet all are as cheerful as if mirth were their only employment. Surely such a household deserves to be called a school of the Christian religion."

He was not fond of money. He felt a pleasure in giving rather than in receiving. Nothing pleased him so much as the power to do a good office for those who were in need. When at Chelsea, he "rambled about the lanes and byways alone, giving alms to the poor villagers whom he sought out in this way, with a liberality whose extent was known to God alone." The south chancel of Chelsea church was rebuilt by his munificence, and furnished with a service of altar plate ; the gift was accompanied with one of those remarks almost prophetic. "Good men," he remarked, "give these things, and bad people take them away." Of a selfish husbanding of his means he appeared incapable. There is scarcely an instance on record, perhaps, except the following, of his taking any pains to recover money which he had lent ; and then he made it the occasion of a pun. Having lent fifty crowns to an attorney, who showed no disposition to repay it, he ventured to give a hint on the subject ; but the borrower com-

menced to moralise on the contempt of riches and the sinfulness of hoarding up money. He told More that whether lawyers or citizens, we should not set our heart on money; that our time in this world was brief, and that it behoved us to remember the maxim, "*Memento morieris.*" ("Remember that thou shalt die.") "There you have it exactly," answered More; "follow up your maxim my friend. *Memento Mori æris.*" ("Remember More's money!")

Sir Thomas More had an aversion to the profession of the law. He admitted no lawyers into his "*Utopia*," and gives them but a questionable character. "I consider them," he says, "as a people whose business it is to disguise matters, and to wrest the law at their pleasure."

A portrait of Sir Thomas More by Holbein was to be seen in 1867 in the Louvre, at Paris, which was supposed to be the one of which Baldinucci relates an anecdote. "The King of England" (he says) "had a portrait of his Chancellor (More) which he placed in a large room with the pictures of other learned men. On the day of the Chancellor's death on the scaffold, the King was angry with his Queen, and told her she was the cause of his death. Queen Anna went to the apartment where the picture was, and looking at it, she was suddenly seized with remorse and horror; she fancied that its gaze was fixed on her reproachfully; she flung the picture out of the window, exclaiming, 'O mercy! the man seems to be still alive; he is looking at me—he is looking at me!'" It is further alleged that the picture fell into the hands of some one passing at the moment, who sent it to the Pope. Another tradition connected with this picture states that it was

amongst the rare collections carried by Bonaparte to the Louvre, and that, at the period when the works of art were restored to the Vatican, Talleyrand contrived to have this picture retained.

The hair-shirt which he wore in "penitential seasons" was left by Margaret Roper at her death to her cousin Margaret Clements, a nun in the Augustinian Convent at Louvain. At the time of the French Revolution this community removed to Spetisbury, in Dorsetshire, where the interesting relic is still preserved entire, with the exception of one of the sleeves, which has been presented by the Augustinian nuns to the Convent of St. Dominic, at Stone, in Staffordshire. The shirt is made of hog's bristles twisted into a kind of net. Margaret Roper, was buried in St. Dunstan's Church, Canterbury. For one hundred years subsequent to her death the leaden box containing her father's head was to be seen resting on her coffin. In 1835, the Roper vault was examined, and a small niche closed with an iron grating was found in the wall above, into which the box containing the head of Sir Thomas More was removed; and we understand it still remains in the same spot⁹.

One of More's early biographers observes, "With alacrity and spiritual joy he received the fatal axe, which no sooner had severed the head from the body, but his soul was carried by angels into everlasting glory, where a crown of martyrdom was placed upon him which can never fade or decay."

"The innocent mirth," says Addison, "which had been so conspicuous in his life did not forsake him to the last. His death was of a piece with his life; there was

⁹ "Anecdotes of Distinguished English Catholics."

nothing in it new, forced, or affected. He did not look upon the severing of his head from his body as a circumstance which ought to produce any change in the disposition of his mind, and as he died in a fixed and settled hope of immortality he thought any unusual degree of sorrow and concern improper."

The author of the "English Chancellors" remarks that "More's character both in public and private life comes as near to perfection as our nature will permit. . . . With all my Protestant zeal, I must feel a higher reverence for Sir Thomas More than for Lord Cromwell or Archbishop Cranmer. I am indeed reluctant to take leave of him, not only from his agreeable qualities and extraordinary merit, but from my abhorrence of the mean, sordid and unprincipled Chancellors who succeeded, and made the latter half of Henry's reign the most disgraceful period in our annals." Mr. Froude affirms that the execution of the "philosophic Chancellor was sounded out into the far corners of the earth, and was the world's wonder, as well for the circumstances under which it was perpetrated as for the preternatural composure with which it was borne. . . . Something of his calmness may have been due to his natural temperament; something to an unaffected weariness of a world which in his eyes was plunging into the ruin of the latter days. But those fair hues of sunny cheerfulness caught their colours from the simplicity of his faith; and never was there a grander Christian victory over death than in that last scene lighted with its lambent humour."

We cannot better conclude this memoir of Sir Thomas More, than by placing before the reader the following eloquent and earnest prayer, found written

in his Latin Diary, and which may be regarded as a reflex of his inner life, and of his ever-present devotion to the Creator: "Illumine, good Lord, my heart! Glorious God! Give me from henceforth Thy Grace, so to set and fix firmly mine heart upon Thee, that I may say with St. Paul, the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world. Take from me all vainglorious minds, and all appetites of mine own praise. Give me, Good Lord, an humble, lowly, quiet, peaceable, patient, charitable, kind, tender, and pitiful mind; and in all my works, and words, and thoughts, to have a taste of Thy Holy Spirit. Give me a full faith, a firm hope, a fervent charity, and a love to Thee incomparably above the love to myself. May I love nothing to Thy displeasure, but every thing in order to Thee! Give me a longing to be with Thee; not for avoiding the calamities of this wicked world, nor so much the pains of purgatory, nor of hell; nor so much for the attaining of the choice of heaven, in respect of mine own commodity, as even for a very love to Thee¹!"

"No encomium is needed here," says Sharon Turner.

DEATH OF KATHERINE OF ARRAGON.—HENRY'S REMORSE.

THE year 1536, replete as it was with sad incidents, involved in the death of Queen Katherine the extinction of Anna Boleyn's earthly success. Henry's heart, in reference to his conscience, appeared to realize the truth of the Portuguese proverb; and his "good intentions" were deeply excited by a letter from the hand of the dying Katherine—full of piety, dignity, and uncomplaining affection. Henry was moved to compunctious

¹ Knight's "Erasmus," Appendix, p. 102; Sharon Turner, Vol. x., p. 397.

tears on reading this valediction of his noble wife ; and in such a heart as his the cause of remorse must be dangerous to its originator. Anna Boleyn acted ungenerously, and without counsel of her better feelings. She did not heed the moody seclusion of the fitful monarch, but obtruded upon his retirement arrayed in the fantastic mourning assumed by the Queen of France, and borrowed from the Chinese. Henry had by many signs exhibited his sorrow at the death of Katherine. Anna Boleyn had not the courage to honour, nor the generosity to lament, her rival ; neither had she the heartful sense to apprehend the workings of compunction. She put on yellow mourning for the “ Dowager Princess of Wales,” as Katherine had been called, but made demonstrations little akin to even a questionable sorrow. There had been a royal lady—more noble than royal—great in parentage, illustrious in descent, but greater and better far in all the qualities of wife and queen. She was outraged in the allegation of incest by her partner in the imputed crime, and was deprived of her station in a manner which at one and the same time shamed and grieved her—the repudiation of herself and the menaced dethronement of her creed. No one can contemplate the life, the character, and lot of this noble woman without deep feelings of sympathy—without sentiments of grief and anger. The avarice of Henry’s father, which made her Henry’s bride, was forgotten in her husband’s love, as long as that husband respected virtue. As a wife she was above reproach : the basest of her foes dared not impugn her conjugal modesty, nor could the King say aught against her loyalty and truth. As a mother and a queen she was tender and dignified ; she was ever as

amiable and meritorious as a parent as she was sadly grand in her right-royal bearing before that conclave of guilty courtiers who divorced her from her temporal throne, to enshrine her in the hearts of posterity. A cruel wrong it must have been felt in her woman's heart to be torn from the condition wherein the affections of her youth had matured, to see her sole living child pronounced illegitimate, and her own pure love, her daughter's honour and fortunes, and her husband's sworn troth and truth sacrificed before the false gods of licence—at the footstool of an ungrateful handmaiden.

When Henry heard of Katherine's death, which took place at Kimbolton Abbey, the 8th January, 1536, what must have been his feelings? The Persian poet avers that, although the flowers may wither, the mind can still imbue them with their pristine fragrance and beauty. To produce this metaphysical reintegration there must be a reason, sanctified by good—memory taking its standpoint on the time and the circumstances when the flowers were culled, and contemplating them through the medium of a happiness deserved.

But Henry had then passed the hour in which his recollections could be joyful. The by-gone, if a faithful mirror, reflected few deeds whose recollection could brighten or refresh.

And it was an eventful past the King had in review—presenting kaleidoscopic aspects to the material eye, but leaving no grateful impress on the conscience. There were before him in his self-communiugs—for Henry pondered, like every man learned beyond his time—occasions when the consciousness of being a man overmasters the kingly station in our common humanity.

There, in his mental picture—shadowed darker than if a Holbein had limned the portrayal—appeared so clouded the joyous days of his childhood, when his gentle mother, Elizabeth of York—the most lovable remnant of a brilliant and short-lived house—lavished on him the affection which she was never invited and never dared to show to his stern yet personally virtuous father. In this retrospect he saw himself, the youthful king, and his fair Castilian bride, without stain as without reproach; the admiration of the people for his own manful beauty, and their almost worship for the marvellous loveliness which is so often born of intellect, if not of lofty birth. He thought of that Katherine, “the lady of many sorrows;” over the fact of whose consignment to the love of England he now darkly brooded. He remembered the blessings of old grey heads as he passed to their mutual coronation to the storied Abbey of Westminster; the flowers, the tears of joy, and that ever-remembered scene, when in the resting-place of monumental kings the benediction was pronounced. Then the faces of old and once trusted friends obtruded on the mental canvas. Was there light upon the picture which revealed to him the meeting between the “Boy King” and “that young man,” Wolsey, the charms of whose conversation first won the affection of his Sovereign—the career of that magnificent minister, the occasion of his fall? Was the picture shadowed by the umbræ of More and Fisher—men worthy of the days of Rome’s best epoch? Perhaps the recollection of Fisher was the saddest object in the review. Fisher had been his preceptor—a sacred relationship from the earliest ages. Reverence for his teacher calmed down from the fiercest spirit of de-

struction into the smile of clemency and benefaction the soul of an Alexander, and made once again a noble and kind-hearted boy of the old war-worn Camillus, who had sworn the deadliest insult to the vanquished denizens of a revolted city. But the curtain falls abruptly, because Henry's pride reminds him that men like these died because they would be less disloyal to their conscience than their King. And then he might fashion his leal wife in her sepulchral garments; and anon, like an ungoverned being, his heart burnt with fury at the cause of his present sorrow. It is a sad and cruel fact, that when man, even the least powerful, errs in woman's case, the weakest always suffers. Alas for generosity! But here was Henry turning the obverse side of the picture; and what against its counterpart could he present in the athletic frivolities of that field of profusion, "The Cloth of Gold," the court orgies, and the gorgeous festivals? The two sides of the picture have been disclosed. In looking there, he realizes the fact that licence had compelled the once-cherished wife to abdicate; devotion and integrity had been deposed by selfishness and craft; and Henry, summing up his retrospect, was now, with guilty self-sparingness, discovering the cause of his remorse and unsatisfactory condition of mind to be the unhappy lady who at present performed the part of spouse.

In one of the last interviews of Queen Katherine with the Royal Commissioners the Queen, in an excited state, delivered herself as follows, surrounded by her retainers and servants:—"I would rather be a poor beggar's wife, and be sure of heaven, than Queen of all the world, and stand in doubt thereof, by reason of my own consent. I stick not for vain glory, but

because I know myself to be the King's true wife, and while you call me the King's subject, I was his subject while he took me for his wife. But if he take me not for his wife, I came not into this realm as merchandise, nor to be married to any merchant; nor do I continue in the same, but as his lawful wife. . . . I have alway demeaned myself well and truly towards the King; and if it can be proved that either in writing to the Pope or any other great personage I have procured any thing against his Highness or have been the means of raising prejudice against the King or his realm, I am content to suffer for it. I have done England little good, and I should be sorry to do it any harm. But if, my lords, I should agree to your proposals, I should slander my own honour and confess myself to have been the King's harlot for four and twenty years. The cause, I cannot tell by what subtle means, has been determined here, within the King's realm, before a man of the King's own making, the Archbishop of Canterbury (Cranmer), not a person indifferent in that behalf; and for the indifference of the place, I think it might have been more indifferent, if it were judged of in hell; for no truth can be suffered here; whereas, the devils themselves, I suppose, do tremble to see the truth in this cause so sorely oppressed." (State Papers, vol. i., p. 403).

The foreign ambassadors who were resident in London in Katherine's time are unanimous in describing her love and admiration for her husband as unbounded. "No wife could be more lovable," writes De Pleine; another says her "queenly virtue stood high," and she once informed a foreign diplomatist that she attributed the victory of Flodden Field and the

prosperity of England to the goodness and piety of her husband.

Wakefield, a professor of Hebrew, at Oxford University, was another of Henry's discreditable advisers on the divorce question. He was at first the advocate of Katherine's "claims to be a lawful wife;" but changed his opinions "from the arguments he heard at the other side." In order to gain the King's confidence he told him that he "could bring forward arguments in favour of his Highness on grounds unknown to any other man in the realm." Such an expounder of "canon law" was hailed with rapture by the King, who again unfolded his "scruples of conscience to this pious professor of Hebrew." Wakefield worked like an assassin against Katherine: for, whilst Gardiner, Bonner, and Fox were outspoken, he laboured in "handling Scripture, and disentombing obsolete statutes and misrepresenting the writings of theologians in doing any thing or every thing"—to promote the King's policy. In one of his letters he admits that he was engaged in an unholy cause—in one that the moral feeling of the country detested and abhorred. "If the people of England," he says, "knew that I was writing against Queen Katherine they would stone me to death." (Letter of Bishop Fisher; Knight's "Erasmus;" Turner, vol. x.; Lingard, vol. iv.)

From Wolsey to Norfolk, from Gardiner to Cranmer, the laity and clerics who participated in the divorce of Katherine seemed to have had no "after-life" regret or remorse for their conduct. The reader has seen the fate of Wolsey; Edward Fox, Bishop of Hereford, is described as having died of the plague in a "state of horror;" the Bishop of Worcester exclaimed, "It

was an evil doing; the Pope was wiser than his English bishops; we were worldly and selfish men;" Cuthbert Tonstall, who, when Bishop of London, denounced the Pope at Paul's Cross, and upheld the divorce and supremacy arrogations of Henry, met his reward from the daughter of Anna Boleyn, five and twenty years later. Stephen Gardiner "lost the King's confidence," and in the following reign was consigned to the Tower by his early friend and fellow-labourer—in the divorce question—Thomas Cranmer. Edmund Bonner has been unjustly stigmatized by Protestant writers for the commission, in Mary's reign, of deeds of which he had no cognizance, and of others which he had no power to prevent. Bonner "aided in the divorce controversy with all the energy, zeal, and talent, he possessed." "When I am in my grave you will regret your present conduct," were the words of Clement VII. to Bonner. In subsequent chapters the reader will find the misfortunes which befel many of the sustainers of the divorce, and the King's blasphemous assumption of the viceroyalty of Christ in this realm—an assumption, which, notwithstanding so many dynasties and revolutions, is still maintained.

The description of the "rival queens," from the pen of the Venetian Ambassadors, may not be uninteresting here. Ludovico Falieri says:—"My Lady Katherine, the queen, is low of stature, inclining to corpulency; a woman of great repute, upright, and full of goodness and devotion; she speaks Spanish, Flemish, French, and English; she is beloved by these islanders far more than any queen they have had. She is forty-five years old, thirty of which have passed since the death of her first husband." Carlo Capello, on December 7th, 1532, thus describes Anna Boleyn in a letter to his

government:—"My lady Anna is no beauty; she is tall of stature, with a sallow complexion, long neck, large mouth, and narrow chest. In fact, she has nothing in her favour besides the King's great passion for her, and her eyes, which are, indeed, black and beautiful." This portrait, drawn by one to whom the face and figure of Anna were daily familiar, does not correspond to that "exquisite loveliness" ascribed to her by Hall and later English historians. The question, however, is now one of small import.

As we shall have subsequently to recur to the divorce, we may refer to contemporary questions, such as this, which the Author has been asked:—"What have the 'Men and Women of the Reformation' to do with the love correspondence of Henry the Eighth and Anna Boleyn?" Merely the sequence of the harvest from the seed. We repeat that the evil passion of Henry for Anna Boleyn was the *primum mobile* of the change of religion in England—a change secularly stabilitated by the diffusion of the property of the monasteries amongst the godless and rapacious minions of the Court. The reader is aware that Sharon Turner complains that original copies of the "love letters" were retained at Rome (and they are there still), to prove evidence against the Reformation; and potent testimony do they give. Those who closely examine all the complications of Henry's divorce from Katherine can come to no other conclusion than that Cranmer's proceedings at Dunstable gave all the confirmation human evil-doing could accord to a revolution in belief, which has engendered what the Premier of England in the year 1869 designated an "upas tree," in speaking of the Irish branch of the English Church, and which has

begotten its innumerable and antagonistic offshoots. But why should we expatiate upon this matter? It has been exultingly proclaimed by many English writers that the "divorce of Katherine gave rise to the glorious light of the Gospel." That is, out of a dark and terrible wrong the day-star of the English Reformation emerged. We have Burnet, Speed, and Oldmixon cautiously tracing the origin of "the light" to Henry and Anna Boleyn; and in our own day we have a cool, calculating Scotchman, not many years back Lord Chancellor of England, stating that the marriage of Henry with the "young Castilian widow" (Katherine) was the first element in creating Protestantism in England. "To that event," he says, "we are indebted for our boasted Reformation." Wolsey, Gardiner, Tonstall, Lee, Bonner, Fox, and other prelates and abbots, in their worldly homage to Henry, whom they all personally loved, seemed to have forgotten their duty to the Church. They all, more or less, paid, even in this world, the penalty of that obsequious forgetfulness of duty to their vows. How far the hesitation of the Pontiff may have influenced the action of the English hierarchy is a question now out of human discussion. It is, however, the part of the historian to chronicle the stern facts which he finds in the pathway of the past, and not to screen, even if he may palliate, the offences of any men, cleric or lay, against the divine institutions of that eternal bequest of the Redeemer, which the most learned of English monarchs has designated "Our Mother Church²." In addressing the English Parliament in

² A note on the Journals of the House of Lords (1603), Vol. ii., p. 264, states that the "King's oration" was omitted, although taken down by the Clerk of the House. The reader will find the passage above

1603, the year of Elizabeth's death, King James the First said :—" I acknowledge the Church of Rome to be our Mother Church." And in a premonition to all Christian monarchs, he added :—" Patriarchs I know, were in the time of the Primitive Church, and I likewise reverence that institution for order-sake : and for myself (if that were yet the question), I would, with all my heart, give consent that the Bishop of Rome should have the first seat. . . . Let him, in God's name, be *primus Episcopus inter omnes Episcopos*, and *Princeps Episcoporum*, so it be no otherwise but as Peter was *princeps Apostolorum*." Taking the period into account this was a daringly honest acknowledgment of a Protestant King.

THE KING AND THE ABBOT.

AMONGST the incidents related of the royal and noble visitors to the abbeys, there are some extant respecting Henry the Eighth in the early part of his reign. The young king, one cold day in February, was hunting in Windsor Forest, and after passing several hours in pursuit of the stag, he missed his attendants ; yet still proceeding, he found himself at the Abbey of Reading ; the gates were thrown open, according to the good old monastic custom, it being the dinner hour. " Just in time," exclaimed his Highness to a monk who stood at the outer door bearing a red cross. " Tell the Lord Abbot that a favourite knight of the King's train, who is cold and hungry after four hours' riding in the forest, has come to seek share of his hospitality." In a

quoted in Sir John Cox Hippisley's Speech on the Emancipation Question in the House of Commons, on Friday, May 18, 1810 ; also in Hippisley's Speeches, published in a volume the same year ; or in the Memoirs of King James I.

few minutes the supposed knight was seated at the table with the Abbot. A smoking sirloin of beef was set before the visitor, who "did ample justice as a feeder, clearing away sundry plates of the beef, besides other dainty things, and four cups of old sack." "How fares thy stomach now?" said the Abbot. "Right well. I never was so hungry, nor had such a relish for roast beef in my life," was the reply of the disguised King. "Here," said the Abbot, "let us both drink long life to our most excellent King, whom we all love for his goodness of heart." The toast having been duly finished by the Abbot and his guest, the former complimented the "great unknown" on "his manly appearance and good appetite," and added, "Alas! my appetite is quite gone; I have no relish for that fine beef you laid so comfortably in your stomach. Indeed, I would give one hundred pounds on the condition that I could feed so heartily on roast beef as you did just now in my presence. Alas! my weak and queasy stomach will hardly digest the wing of a chicken or a slice from a small rabbit; a capon I cannot touch at all; but when I was young, O Sir Knight, I was fond of belly cheer like you, and galloped my horse for hours in the forest." The King, having thanked the Abbot for his hospitality, departed, as he had come, unknown. In a few weeks subsequently the Abbot of Reading was committed to the Tower, and kept a close prisoner for seven days, during which period the only food he received was a small quantity of bread and water twice a day. On the eighth day he was brought to a warm dining-hall, where he was placed at table with a smoking sirloin of beef before him, and the attendants all spoke kindly to him. "Good Lord Abbot," said one of

them, "here is right good belly-cheer; eat your fill, and make merrie after." "That I will," said the Abbot, "for I had no relish for roast beef this thirty years until now." He dined off the roast beef, "clearing away as many plates" as the hungry unknown had done at Reading Abbey a few weeks previous.

King Henry, who was a concealed spectator of the scene, suddenly presented himself, exclaiming, "My Lord Abbot, deposit your hundred pounds in gold, or else there is no going from this place all the days of your life. I have been your doctor, who cured you of the queasy stomach; and here, as I deserve, I demand my fee for the same." The "Abbot's heart became light" at the explanation, and pledged his word that the gold would be sent to Windsor on his return to the Abbey. Shaking the Abbot warmly by the hand, Henry said, "My good lord, your word is good for ten times the amount it is pledged for." After drinking the King's health in a flowing cup of sack, the Abbot departed from the Tower, "much merrier in heart than the day he entered it³." A similar anecdote has been related of Francis the First.

On other occasions in the early years of his sovereignty Henry visited some of the abbeys of Gloucestershire, as a minstrel, or a painter; at more remote districts he went in Lent as a pilgrim, "edifying all by the humility and fervour of his devotion." During the same penitential season he rendered kind offices to many of the peasantry of Berkshire, "in divers ways without being known⁴."

³ Fuller's "Church History;" Thorndale's "Memorials of English Abbeys."

⁴ Ibid.

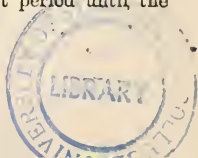
Queen Katherine made pilgrimages almost every Lent to convents in remote parts of the country, where not even the abbess "knew the qualitie of the pilgrim ladye." In 1513 Henry wrote to Leo X., eulogizing the religious orders of England—the Franciscans, Minors, or Grey Friars, being special objects of his commendation. He described them as "remarkable for Christian poverty, sincerity, charity, and devotion." (Ellis's "Original Letters," III. i., 166.) The evil spirits of Audley, Cromwell, and Cranmer had not then penetrated the Council Chamber, and England's poor continued to be guided and fed by their "gentle landlords and fathers of the monastery."

THE OBSERVANT FATHERS OF GREENWICH.

THE ruin of the Observant Fathers of Greenwich, who had never concealed their condemnation of the marriage of Anna Boleyn, was another of that Queen's tragic successes. This order were not only broken up as a community, but, in the words of a contemporary, "were hunted down," a decree having been issued that "no religious house should give them meat, drink, or shelter." Two hundred of them were imprisoned; forty died of putrid fever, and ten others, who were in extreme old age, died from cold and hunger. Persons "were sent forth on the highways to denounce them as lazy and profligate;" but this was the course adopted in almost every case. Stowe's narrative of the circumstances which led to the quarrel between the King and the Observants is an interesting document, discovering much observation on the "manners and passions of the times." "The first that openly resisted

or reprehended the King's Highness touching his marriage with Anna Boleyn was one Friar Peto, a simple man, yet very devout, of the order of Observants. This goodly man, preaching at Greenwich upon the two-and-twentieth chapter of the First Book of Kings, viz. the last part of the story of Ahab, saying, 'And even where the dogs *licked* the blood of Naboth, even there shall the dogs lick thy blood also, O King, and therewithal spake of the lying prophets, which abashed the King, &c.^s ; and I am,' quoth he, 'that Micaiah whom thou wilt hate, because I must tell thee truly that this marriage is unlawful ; and I know I shall eat the bread of affliction, and drink the water of sorrow, yet because our Lord hath put it into my mouth I must speak it.' And when he (Peto) had strongly inveighed against the King's second marriage, to dissuade him from it, he further saith, 'There are many other preachers, yea, too many, who preach and persuade thee otherwise, feeding thy folly and frail affections upon the hope of their own worldly promotion ; and by that means they destroy thy soul, thy honour, and posterity, to obtain fat benefices, to become rich abbots, and get episcopal jurisdiction, and other ecclesiastical dignities. There, I say, are the four hundred prophets, who, in the spirit of lying, seek to deceive thee ; but take good heed, lest you, being seduced, find Ahab's punishment, which was to have his blood licked up of the dogs,' saying it was the greatest miscarriage of princes to be daily abused by flatterers, &c. The King, being thus reproved, endured it patiently, and

^s Elizabeth was baptized in the Church of the Observants at Greenwich. Only eleven months elapsed from that period until the final ruin of the Order.



did no violence to Peto; but the next Sunday, being the eighth of May, Dr. Curwin preached in the same place, who most strongly reproached Father Peto and his preaching, and called him dog, slanderer, base beggarly friar, closeman, rebel, and traitor; saying that no subject should speak so audaciously to princes. And having spoke much to that effect, and in commendation of the King's marriage, thereby to establish his seed in his seat for ever, &c.; and then Dr. Curwin, supposing he had utterly suppressed Father Peto and his partakers, he lift up his voice and said, 'I speak to thee, Peto, which maketh thyself Micaiah that thou mayest speak evil of kings, but now thou art not to be found, being fled for fear of shame, as being unable to answer my arguments.' But whilst he thus speaketh, there was one Elstow, a fellow-friar to Peto, standing in the rood-loft, who, with a bold voice, said to Dr. Curwin, 'Good Sir, you know that Father Peto, as he was commanded, is now gone to a provincial council, holden at Canterbury, and not fled for fear of you, for to-morrow he will return again. In the meantime, I am here as another Micaiah, and will lay down my life to prove all those things true which he hath brought out of the Holy Scripture; and to this combat I challenge thee, before God and all equal judges. Even unto thee, Curwin, I say, which are one of the four hundred prophets into whom the spirit of lying has entered, and seek out of adultery to establish succession, betraying the King unto endless perdition, more for thy own vain-glory and hope of promotion than for the discharge of thy dogged conscience and the King's salvation!' On this Father Elstow waxed hot, and spake very earnestly, so as they could not make him cease his

speech, until the King himself bade him hold his peace, and gave order that he and Peto should be convented (cited) before the Council, which was done the next day. And when the lords had rebuked them there, the Earl of Essex (Thomas Cromwell) told them that they deserved to be put into a sack and cast into the Thames. Whereupon Elstow, smiling, said, 'Threaten these things to rich and dainty folk, who are clothed in purple, fare deliciously, and have their chiefest hope in this world, for we esteem them not, but are joyful that for the discharge of our duties we are driven hence; and with thanks to God, we know the way to heaven to be as ready by water as by land, and therefore we care not which way we go.' Those friars and all the rest of their order were banished shortly after, and then none durst openly oppose themselves against the King's affections⁶."

Curwin was made Dean of Hereford, for his pliant advocacy of the King's conduct. When Cuthbert Tunstall preached several sermons against the Pope's spiritual supremacy in England, he was answered by several powerful orations from the Observant Fathers. They constituted missions throughout the country, and enjoined the people "not to leap out of Peter's ship, and to beware of the false prophets who were ministering to the King's vanity." In Yorkshire thousands of people came forth to greet them. They were fearless in denouncing all encroachments upon the Church, for which they earned the enmity of the Court party, and the reverence and affection of the people.

Richard Gyht, one of the Observant brotherhood of

⁶ "Stowe's Chronicle," p. 562; Hollinshed and Thorndale.

Greenwich, was the spy of Anna Boleyn upon the actions of the community; giving her constant intelligence as to the opinions "expressed by the Fathers upon the merits of the rival Queens." Gyht, was rewarded by Anna with a rich living⁷. The Franciscans also suffered loss of property, liberty, and life, by the boldness with which they denounced the divorce of Katherine, and the marriage of Anna. The Franciscans, resident at Greenwich, had several distinguished scholars and theologians amongst their body.

In the Carew State Papers are to be found some of the troubles caused to Cromwell and Archbishop Browne by the zeal of the Observant Fathers, who made common cause with the Irish Catholics against the King's assumption of spiritual supremacy and "all other approaches to the Reformation."

FALL OF ANNA BOLEYN.

IN the autumn of 1535, Anna Boleyn became "grave and composed in manner," and, ceasing to occupy herself in the pursuits of pleasure or the excitement of the chase, spent her hours of domestic retirement with her ladies, as her royal mistress Katherine had done, in "needlework and discreet communication." Wyatt tells us that the matchless tapestry at Hampton Court was, for the most part, wrought by the skilful hand of this Queen and her ladies; "but far more precious," he says, "in the sight of God were those works which she caused her maidens and those about her daily to

⁷ Ellis's Original Royal Letters; Third Series.

execute in shirts and other garments for the use of the poor; and, not contented with that, her eye of charity, her hand of bounty passed through the whole land—each place felt that heavenly flame burning in her,—all times will remember it.” To her credit, it is recorded she directed a certain sum from her privy purse to be distributed to every village in England for the relief of its distressed inhabitants. With greater wisdom she planned the institution of a variety of manufactures, with a view of giving more permanent assistance to those who were destitute of a livelihood, and without employment, in consequence of the ruin of the religious houses. During the last nine months of her life she distributed 14,000*l.* in alms; she also caused many promising youths to be educated, and sent to college at her expense, with the intention of rendering their talents and learning serviceable either in the State or the Church. But whilst performing these good offices she continued to incite the King to persecute his lawful wife by depriving her of the solace of her daughter’s company, and exacting from the disinherited princess submission from which nature and religion alike revolted. There were, however, moments when Anna felt the insecurity of her position. At best she was only the Queen of a party, for the generous and independent portion of the nobles and people of England still regarded Katherine as the lawful possessor of the title and place which Henry had bestowed on another. A tradition still exists amongst a considerable portion of the English people that Anna Boleyn was a “sound Protestant,” doubtless deriving their impression from writers like Burnet, Speed, Hume, Smollett, &c.—forgetting all the while that Protestantism could not claim

Anna Boleyn except on account of her treason to a good Queen and the betrayal of her own womanly honour. Miss Strickland says:—"As Anna Boleyn adhered to all the ceremonies of the Roman ritual, and professed the doctrine of transubstantiation, a Protestant she cannot be called with truth. The martyrdom of Bilney, of Frith, and other Reformers, were perpetrated while she was at the height of her power; and, although it would be unjust to attribute to her the murderous cruelty exercised by Henry and his 'spiritual advisers,' there is no record of any intercession urged by her to save these blameless martyrs from the flames." (Vol. ii. p. 657.) Miss Strickland here, we venture to say with due respect, does not state the entire case. The uninitiated reader would imagine that it was the terrible Gardiner, Bonner, and so forth, who filled at this time the sinecure office of "conscience"-keepers to Henry. But, in fact, their favour had passed out with the termination of the divorce; and Cranmer and Poynt occupied the position of the King's "spiritual advisers" when those "blameless martyrs" were burned. In subsequent chapters it will be seen that Cranmer, during Henry's reign, often rehearsed against the Reformers the sad closing scene of his own existence.

As has been stated, the triumph of Anna Boleyn over the royal lady of Arragon was but brief. Her confinement of a dead son sealed Henry's disgust and her fate. No being is so ready to find fault as the man possessed by a foregone conclusion. Henry employed the interval of her illness to provide for her displacement. The dead child and the dead love were buried together. On Jane Seymour's once coming to Court

Anna Boleyn noticed a jewel hung round her neck, and wished to look at it. Struck with the young lady's reluctance to submit it to her inspection, the Queen snatched it from her with violence, and she found it to contain Henry's miniature, presented by him to the wearer. From that day Anna dated her own decline in the affections of the King, and foresaw the ascendancy of her rival. However this might be, it is certain that Henry about this time began to regard the conduct of his once worshipped Anna with an altered eye. The easy gaiety of manner which he had once remarked with delight, as an indication of the "innocence of her heart and the artlessness of her disposition," was now regarded as a culpable levity, offensive to his pride and excitive of his jealousy. His impetuous temper scorned to investigate proofs or to fathom motives; a pretext alone was wanting to his rage, and this he found quite soon. May-day was wont to be observed at Court as a high festival. Joust and tournament were held at Greenwich, before the King and Queen, in which Viscount Rochford, the Queen's brother, was chief challenger, and Henry Norris principal defender. In the midst of the entertainment the King rose suddenly and quitted the place in anger, but from what cause is not known. Perhaps Mr. Ainsworth in one of his historical fictions has given us the real facts. Saunders alleges that it was on Henry seeing his consort drop her handkerchief, which Norris picked up. The Queen, sad and pale, retired from the scene. The hour of her sorrow was at hand, and quick pursuing fate upon her footsteps. The "sweet smile" that followed the favourite epithet of "darling" became but a bitter memory; and as husband and wife Henry

and Anna never, in this world, met again. She was committed to the Tower in a few hours subsequent on a charge of treason and adultery. She earnestly besought the authorities to procure her an interview with the King, but her request was rejected. She then wrote the following letter to her husband, the latter clause of which has been most unfairly and unthinkingly assumed as an acknowledgment of guilt, whereas it was but the defiance of conscious innocence, seeming to admit guilt owing only to the poverty of her language—"Try me, good King, but let me have a lawful trial; and let not my sworn enemies sit as my accusers and judges. Yea, let me receive an open trial; for my truth shall fear no open shame; then shall you see either mine innocence cleared, your suspicion and conscience satisfied, the ignominy and slander of the world stopped, or my guilt openly declared." Queen Anna also wrote letters to the Princess Mary and others, whom she had at different periods injured, imploring their forgiveness. Those thus written to were willing enough to pardon; but not so Henry. Her brother died a victim of his wife, who witnessed against him. Lord Rochford made an eloquent and affecting defence. He asserted the innocence of himself and his sister, reminded the court that the horrible crime alleged against him rested solely on the evidence of one woman, and that woman his own unnatural wife. He asked, was it possible that they would condemn him on the testimony of that woman? A spectator of the trial states "that Rochford answered every question point by point, so that no man was ever seen to do it better, not even Sir Thomas More, who had such power of eloquence. He made a solemn declaration of his

innocence, declaring that no one living could depose that they had seen him behave in the manner sworn to by Lady Rochford." The judges differed in opinion, some of them considered it a "dreadful act to find him guilty on the evidence of his own wife, unsupported by any other witnesses. After some apparent deliberation, however, they unanimously pronounced against him as expected. His execution soon followed. He died with fortitude, protesting to the last his innocence of the crime for which he suffered. He said that "he would exhort every one to put no trust in courts, states, or kings; but to place their entire confidence in Heaven alone." Lord Rochford was one of the most gifted and accomplished noblemen of his time—a distinguished scholar, a poet, and a painter (Meteren, p. 21). Sir Francis Weston (another of the accused) was remarkably handsome. His young wife and mother offered one hundred thousand crowns to save his life, but in vain.

Norris and Smeaton—one vindicating, the other criminating in the craven hope of saving his life by a confession suggested, perhaps, by Cromwell, the deadly enemy of the Queen—perished on the gallows. Anna's turn came full soon. A panegyrist of Henry states, "as in the choice of the commission, as in the conduct of the trial, as in every detail through which the cause was passed, the King had shown outwardly but one desire, to do all which the most strict equity prescribed." And again the same writer says, "Twenty-seven peers of 'unblemished honour'—the noblest blood in the realm—were charged with the investigating of the Queen's character, and each of them severally stated on their 'oath and their honour' that she was guilty." Never

perhaps was there a greater mistake. Those nobles were either poor, embarrassed, or greedy of patronage : all of them were notoriously servile to the Crown. This character applies with equal justice to nearly all the peerage of the time. Anon the reader will be able to judge of the “unblemished honour” of those notables. There are still preserved a long list of the charges made against the Queen ; there is, however, no record extant of the “proofs.” The accusation was made, and inevitably sworn to—that is, if it were made at all—without the Queen being able to confront her accusers. The next scene in the drama was to place the defenceless woman at the “bar,” and the twenty-seven “unblemished lords” individually pronounced her guilty of “adultery and incest.” Her kinsman, the Duke of Norfolk, with brutal solemnity pronounced the sentence—“to be burnt to death at a stake,” which sentence the “royal mercy” commuted to the headsman’s less painful process of “cutting off the head with a well-tempered sword.”

The circumstances which occurred subsequent to this mockery of a trial demonstrate how far the King acted in the “strict spirit of equity” ascribed to him. Anna’s statement to Cranmer of an “early indiscretion” may now be considered just as questionable as that of being “not only formally, but really and completely, married to Lord Percy nine years previous.” But then Percy was also examined before Archbishop Cranmer and Cromwell on oath, when he declared that no “contract of marriage or any illegitimate intercourse, had ever taken place between him and Mistress Anna Boleyn.” Burnet observes, “that if Anna was really married to Percy, the after marriage to the King was completely

null; and consequently there was no adultery on her part as the King's wife. The sentence of death and divorce could not therefore have had any legal existence." But we may be informed that Henry's command made "wrong right, and right wrong;" no doubt the "unblemished peers" held the same opinion as their royal master. Mr. Froude, who has described Anna's judges as "unblemished peers," has, however, the candour to inform his readers what kind of reputation the Upper House was remarkable for in those days. "The Lords" (writes he) "had ceased to be the leaders of the English people; they existed as an armament rather than a power; and under the *direction* of the Council they followed as the stream drew them, when individually, if they had so dared, they would have chosen a far other course." Mr. Froude, in his vindication of Henry, observes that "if the revelations of Anna's antecedent deeds be true her fate need scarcely excite further sympathy." None of the grave charges made against the unhappy lady have been proved—not one.

Cranmer's letter to the King on Queen Anna's arrest, whilst speaking of her former goodness, delicately insinuates a doubt as to her present innocence, and states, "I am exceedingly sorry that such faults *can be proved* by (against) the Queen, as I heard of in this relation" (Burnet's Hist., p. 200-1). This was just the kind of suggestive sympathy and advice Henry desired from his "spiritual counsellor," who, judging by his conduct in the divorce of Katherine, and other matters, in all probability knew his master's arrangements for another wife. Five days before the arrest of Anna, the "future proceedings were agreed upon"

as to her trial. A special commission had been issued on the 25th of April to "various noblemen and judges, for the investigation of the charges to be preferred against the Queen." The commissioners having been duly sworn they adjourned their proceedings to the 10th of May, to "send bills up to the grand jury of Westminster against the Queen^s." Although Cranmer's name is not in any way connected with the commission issued for the trial of Anna five days before she was arrested, it is impossible to believe that he was not fully aware of every thing that was being concerted for the ruin of his patroness.

Sharon Turner, with evident reluctance, considers Cranmer's letter to the King on this occasion, "open to some criticism." "Could the Archbishop forget his own obligations to the Queen, or his previous estimation of her general merits?" (Vol. x. p. 437.) The reader will see, in later pages, details of the duplicity of Cranmer towards Anna Boleyn.

So much had Anna mistaken her friends, that she told Kingston, "I would I had my bishops, for they would all go to the King for me." (Singer's Cav., p. 224; Ellis, p. 2.) Bishop Shaxton and other prelates forsook the Queen in her emergency. Like Cranmer, Shaxton could not refrain from writing "damaging epistles" to Cromwell against the Queen. Four days after her execution, Dr. Shaxton informed Lord Cromwell that he believed she was guilty. (MSS. Otho, C. 10.) Yet it is not going far to say that the Bishop knew that Anna was at least as much innocent as Lady Rochford afterwards acknowledged.

^s Birch MSS. in British Museum, No. 4293.

"The deserted Queen does not appear to have had one friend to suggest to her husband any consideration that could produce compassion, lenity, reasonable doubt, calm investigation, fair criticism, or a delay sufficient to ensure a painstaking and just settlement of the accusation. All seem to have abandoned her" (Turner, Vol. x. p. 438).

"What Anna Boleyn spoke at her trial was much to the purpose and very interesting" (Godwin, p. 138). They who saw and heard judged her innocent (Meteren, p. 21). The Lord Mayor of London who was present "remarked subsequently that he could not observe any thing in the proceedings against her, but that they were resolved to seek an occasion to put her to death." She was ordered by the judges to lay aside her crown and robes; she immediately complied; protesting her innocence again and again (Meteren, Turner). On hearing the decision of the court she raised her hand on high and exclaimed—"O Father and Creator: O Thou Who art the way, the truth, and the life, Thou knowest that I have not deserved this death" (Meteren). When asked "why sentence of death should not be pronounced against her," she made a calm and dignified reply, which was considered by many of those present as the speech of an innocent and injured woman. "There is," says Sharon Turner, "a combination of feeling, natural eloquence, and good sense in her speech, which need no panegyrist, and must, with her beautiful person, have made a deep impression against the evidence which was merely circumstantial" (Vol. x., p. 447). Wyatt states that the "opinion of the populace of London and other places was, that she had cleared herself with a most wise and noble speech" (p. 214). The account given

in the Harleian MSS., "that having an excellent quick wit, and being a ready speaker, she did so answer all objections that her acquittal was expected." Camden mentions that the "spectators of the trial deemed her innocent, and nearly circumvented." (Anal. Intro.)

Of the conduct of Anna Boleyn in relation to Queen Katherine there can be no difference of opinion; but any offence towards Henry is far more than doubtful.

All those convicted of a participation in the alleged crime of the Queen were now disposed of by the headsman, and it was supposed by many that her sentence would be commuted to banishment; indeed, until within three days of her death, she herself entertained this hope; but the feeling of the nobility and squires against her emboldened the King to strike the fatal blow, and, as the sequel proved, to revel in fiendish joy over the destruction of one who had for nearly nine years "literally bewitched him with her love charms."

Her fate was decided. Now herself standing on the threshold of eternity, the fallen Queen must have contemplated the past with truly bitter feelings. She was in the position to which she had been the main cause of bringing so many others. Conscience vindicated its power; and the influence of her early religious training was witnessed in her sincere and humble penitence.

On Thursday, May 18, she was occupied at intervals in prayer, and writing letters to persons whom she had injured. On the same day she sent Lady Kingston to Hunsdon, where the Princess Mary was immured, to beg of her, on bended knee, to pardon her all the wrongs she had heaped upon her when possessing a stepmother's authority.

The day passed, and with the twilight of the May evening the Queen's hopes had finally fled. She "paced the gloomy chamber; she cried and prayed; kissed the cross; retired to sleep; could not sleep;" rose again; conversed with the two ladies left to "care her," and from whom she received little comfort. Amongst the female spies who were placed about her was her own aunt, Mistress Boleyn, who behaved with "rudeness and unkindness." The unhappy Queen also complained of the conduct of the King's Council towards her. "I have" (she says) "been cruelly handled by the King's Council." She spoke of how all her friends had abandoned her; that she always endeavoured to succour the poor, and yet they exulted in her fall. Then clasping her hand, she exclaimed, "Oh God, Oh Jesus, I deserve this fate for my sins!"

Sharon Turner and other historians persist in stating that Archbishop Cranmer visited Anna Boleyn as a "confessor;" she was well aware at that period that Cranmer was a married man, and as she undoubtedly died in the Catholic Faith, she would not, of course, accept his ministrations as a priest. If he did visit her it was as a spy; but there is no satisfactory proof of his having gone to the Tower at the time. She was attended by an Augustinian named Ambrose Whyte, to whom she made a general confession of her life. He visited her for three hours daily; she was also instructed on religious subjects by Henri Lavenue, a French Ecclesiastic, and Father Thirlwall, a Carthusian. She received their instructions with an "earnest feeling;" and Thirlwall reports that she was "well-informed in all the tenets of the Catholic Church in her youth."

The stories of Matthew Parker and other "Reformers" carrying "Gospel comfort" to Anna Boleyn in prison is a pure fiction—a Foxeism—another name for the reverse of truth. Matthew Parker⁹ was "about the Court," like Poynt, Bale, and other evil clerics, but Anna's "recommendation of the infant Elizabeth to Parker's spiritual charge" is highly improbable, as she knew his opinions were as loose fitting as those of Cranmer and his compeers. If Anna had entrusted her daughter to Parker there would have been ground to believe that she had adopted what is now called Protestantism¹. But that cultus had not itself adopted a Liturgy until ten years after her death (1546), the adoption of the "reformed creed," occurring in 1547-8. Miss Strickland, in an evident tone of regret, avows that "*Anna Boleyn did not die a Protestant*" (Vol. ii. p. 690). Almost all Protestant writers have treated Anna Boleyn as the cause, if not the creator, of the Reformation. Certainly it was to possess her that Henry quarrelled with Rome. One of the most recent Protestant authorities—and truly the most reliable from his rare sources of information—acknow-

⁹ A Benedictine, named John Parker, filled the office of chaplain to Anna Boleyn for a short time, but having incurred the displeasure of Cromwell, fled to Belgium. He was no relative of Matthew Parker; and, in his correspondence with Philips, Dean of Rochester, he does not even mention the name of Matthew Parker. John Parker has in substance written that "Queen Anna had a bad opinion of Archbishop Cranmer for a long time before her death, and that she dreaded any action between Cromwell and the Archbishop against her." Father Parker died at Bristol, in "exceeding poverty," in the year 1564 (the 7th of Elizabeth).

¹ Parker, like the notorious Curwin, preached "some sermons in favour of Anna," for which he claimed a deanery in Norfolk. This is the only foundation for his being her chaplain.

ledges, whilst deploring, the admitted connexion of Anna Boleyn's intercourse with the King and the change of the national religion. He says:—"Protestantism might still, with its usual unhistorical partisanship, have gilded over her immoralities, but the Church of England must ever look upon Anna Boleyn with downcast eyes, full of sorrow and full of shame" (Blunt's "Reformation," p. 197).

The morning of the last day came. The Queen rose at four of the clock, and was soon after in communication with her confessor; she "heard two masses, and knelt on a stone floor for half an hour before receiving Holy Communion at the hands of Father Thirlwall²." She spoke little after this period. She was weak and languid; every step approaching the door made her tremble lest it was the Governor of the Tower and his officers. But, being assured that she had "several hours longer to live," she smiled and seemed to breathe freely.

Within a few minutes of twelve o'clock on Friday, May 19 (1536), Queen Anna was seen approaching the Tower-green. A slight murmur arose amongst those admitted to witness "a spectacle which England had never seen before—a head which had worn the crown falling under the sword of an executioner." The poor victim appeared walking feebly, supported by Kingston. "She seemed half stupefied, and looked back from time to time at the ladies by whom she was followed." An affecting incident here occurred. A little boy some five years of age advancing from the crowd presented her with some flowers, saying, "Here, good Queen,

² Father Thirlwall's "Last Hours of Queen Anna" (Paris, 1538).

are May flowers for you. Do not cry ; because you are going to heaven where the little children go³." The Queen kissed the child, and in a faint voice said, "God bless you, my child!" When the procession approached the scaffold she became faint on observing the well-known faces of Lord Cromwell, the Duke of Suffolk, the King's illegitimate son (the Duke of Richmond), and others who paid her obsequious homage but a few weeks before. Cromwell is stated to have attended at the King's especial command.

"A general murmur arose through the crowd." The Queen rallied, and seemed to have reserved all her fortitude for the last moment. She asked permission to address the populace, and the Lieutenant having assented, she spoke as follows :—"Christian people, I am come here to die. And according to law and by law, I am adjudged to death ; therefore I will speak nothing against it. I am come hither to accuse no man nor to speak any thing of that whereof I am accused and condemned to die. But I pray God save the King and send him long to reign over you, for a gentler and more merciful prince there never was, and to me he was ever a good, a gentle, and a sovereign lord. If any person will meddle with my cause, I require him to judge the best. With these words I take my leave of the world and of you ; and I heartily desire you all to pray for me. Oh, Lord Jesus, have mercy on me ! To God I commend my soul."

³ In a letter from Maurice, Cranmer's secretary, to Lord Wiltshire, he sets down several incidents which occurred at the execution, and draws a pathetic picture of the "saintly way" in which the Queen died ; and the "decent behaviour of the people."

A pause of a few minutes now followed, and many among the spectators were of opinion that "at the last moment" the royal mercy would have been extended to her who was so often addressed as "darling," "sweet angel," "my life's hope," &c. But Henry's licentiousness was inexorable. All eyes were turned to the Queen as she stood preparing to undress, but every ray of hope seemed to have left her when she beheld the stern glance of Cromwell. Her ermine cloak and head-dress were now removed; she knelt down and called aloud to Jesus to have mercy on her soul. She then meekly laid her head upon the block, the signal was given, and the executioner at one blow severed the head from the body. A "shriek of affright" burst from her female dependents; a murmur of sympathy from the crowd; a smile from the Duke of Richmond, and a look of triumph from Thomas Cromwell, closed the scene.

A writer in "*Excerpta Historica*," discussing the probable accuracy of the accounts extant as to Anna Boleyn's execution, refers as follows to a letter translated some years back by the late Lord Strangford from the original, which is to be seen in the library of the monastery of Alcobaça, in Portugal. The editor of "*Excerpta*" thus introduces the letter:—"Though they agree in the main points, there is some variation between the speech assigned to her (Anna) by Hall and Bishop Burnet, and that which this letter attributes to her; but if the two reports be estimated according to what is probable she would have said, the letter is certainly entitled to most credit. The allusion to her head and the affecting address to her waiting-women, are not noticed by Hall or Burnet. Not a word

occurs of the romantic story told by a modern writer (Disraeli) that Anna refused to allow her eyes to be bandaged, and that the executioner was so affected by their tender glances as to be incapable of performing his office until he had recourse to a stratagem to attract her attention to another part of the scaffold. On the contrary, this foreign spectator expressly says, that the Queen's eyes were bandaged by one of her ladies. In the fact of her being executed with a sword instead of an axe⁴ all writers agree; Burnet and other historians state that each of the gentlemen implicated in the Queen's alleged crime were beheaded, excepting Smeaton, who was hanged. According to the Portuguese letter he also was decapitated. That this letter is of the highest interest is certain; and as the communications of the Lieutenant of the Tower closed on the day preceding Anna's execution it is also very valuable as being perhaps the most authentic narrative of the affair extant."

"On Friday the 19th, the Queen (Anna) was beheaded according to the manner and custom of Paris—that is to say, with a sword, which thing had not been before seen in this land of England. A scaffold having four or five steps was then and there set up. And the unhappy Queen, assisted by the Captain of the Tower, came forth together with the four ladies who accompanied her, and she was wholly habited in a robe of black damask, made in such guise that the crape,

⁴ There has been exhibited in the Tower, and it may yet be there, a small axe, which the cicerone informs the visitor was the identical implement used in Queen Anna's decollation. There is, we have no doubt, still less genuineness in the origin of the instruments of torture displayed in the Tower museum, and said to have been found in the Spanish Armada.

which was white, did fall on the outer side thereof. And she then besought the Captain of the Tower, that he would in no wise hasten the minute of her death until she should have spoken that which she had in mind to say."

The speech to the spectators, already quoted, differs in no material instance from that given by the Portuguese gentleman, who, however, adds the following address of Anna to her ladies, which some of our historians have not noticed:—

"Then with her own hands, she took her coifs from her head, and delivered them to one of her ladies, and putting on a little cap of linen to cover her hair withal, she said 'Alas, poor head, in a very brief space thou wilt roll in the dust on this scaffold, and as in life thou didst not merit to wear the crown of a queen, so in death thou deserveth not a better doom than this. And ye, my damsels, who whilst I lived ever showed yourselves so diligent in my service, and who are now to be present at my last hour and mortal agony, as in good fortune ye were faithful to me, so even at this my miserable death ye do not forsake me. And as I cannot reward you for your true service to me, I pray you take comfort for my loss; howbeit, forget me not; and be always faithful to the King's grace, and to her, whom with happier fortune ye may love as your queen and mistress. And esteem your honour far beyond your life. In your prayers to the Lord Jesus, forget not to pray for my soul.'"

The narrator then proceeds to describe the execution:—"And being minded to say no more, she knelt down upon both knees and one of her ladies covered her eyes with a bandage, and then they withdrew

themselves some little space, and knelt down over against the scaffold, bewailing bitterly and shedding many tears. And thus, and without more to say or do, was her (the Queen's) head stricken off; she making no confession of her fault, and only saying, O Lord God, have pity on my soul;' and one of the ladies then took up the head, and the others the body, and covering them with a sheet, did put them into a chest which there stood ready, and carried them to the church which is within the Tower, where they say she lieth buried."

The following passage seems to be rather the "Court gossip of the day," than the statement of one who was present at a council meeting; for the assertion could not have been made in the presence of the populace. It is highly improbable that the Portuguese noble was present. He might have received his information from some member of the Council. "The Council," writes he, "declared that the Queen's daughter was the child of her own brother Lord Rochford; and that as the child of a private person be forthwith removed from that place (the Tower); and that the King should again receive that princess who was the daughter of the former and true Queen, as his own, and real daughter, and the King did so receive her with the utmost graciousness.

"From London the 10th day of June, 1536."

The suggestions as to the Princess Mary are not at all probable. Who amongst the Council would dare tender such advice to the King at that moment? Cranmer certainly was not the man to do so; neither would Cromwell; besides they were both hostile to Mary. There can be little doubt that the Council,

with Cromwell at its head, were infamous enough to put forth the terrible accusation above made, in order to remove the odium of the execution from the King's name. Cromwell was capable of inventing any wicked charge in order to destroy those who crossed his path. He had a personal interest in the destruction of Anna Boleyn; yet, after all, the evidence as to this extraordinary "Council judgment" is not sufficiently authenticated; and perhaps never will. Miss Strickland states that "horrid doubts had been murmured at this time that Elizabeth was the daughter of Lord Rochford."

Lord Rochford made no direct denial of the charges for which he was condemned; he merely stated that he "had been a bad living man and a great sinner." The subsequent declaration of his wife, when on the scaffold with Katherine Howard, went far to clear up the shocking charges preferred against Anna Boleyn in connexion with him. Here are the dying words of Lady Rochford:—"I suppose God has permitted me to suffer this shameful doom as a punishment for having assisted in my husband's death, by swearing falsely against the Queen—his sister." Turner, who has carefully examined every document (then extant) bearing upon the charges brought against Anna Boleyn at her trial, the characters of the witnesses, the judges, the conduct of the prosecutors, and even the probable motives of the King himself, arrives at the conclusion that the evidence and papers produced against Anna had been specially prepared in order to send the Queen to the scaffold branded with infamy.

Polydore Vergil declares it to be his belief that Anna was guilty of adultery, although he has produced no evidence to sustain his assertion. Are we to dis-

sociate the "opinions" of Polydore Vergil as a politician and a theologian? If he wrote as a theologian could he believe at one and the same time in the legality of Cranmer's divorce of Katherine at Dunstable, and again in his subsequent judgment at Lambeth Palace, declaring valid a marriage (between Henry and Anna) which took place four or five months *before* the said Archbishop delivered judgment against Katherine? Polydore was a man of mark in the then narrow world of literature. He merged the cleric in the politician; and his adherence was counted of much importance by Henry. He therefore secured it.

Pollino, in his "*Istoria della Ecclesia*," states that the Princess Mary had but "a poor opinion of Queen Anna's honesty," for "when present in the lying-in chamber," at the birth of Elizabeth, the princess heard so much from the relatives, friends, and court ladies present, that she openly avowed her belief that "the infant was not her sister." Pollino may be regarded as hostile to Anna, and therefore untrustworthy. His statement is likewise contradicted by the fact, that no child of Henry the Eighth displayed so much of his talents and evil passions as Elizabeth.

Turner remarks that Anna's dying address "may rationally claim our unqualified commendation. If she was innocent, it was a heroic act of forgiveness at the most trying moment of human passion, which stands alone in human biography for the unpretending manuer in which it was performed. Those who have pardoned their oppressors have declared that they did so; and thus both reproach them by their forgiveness, and claim the merit of extending it. But Anna Boleyn praised the man whose mandate was lifting the fatal

axe that was to kill her, although before her gentle voice could reach his ear, she would be for ever beyond his power to recall. No kindness could be more magnanimous, more disinterested, or less ostentatious. If she was really guilty, she died with a modest fortitude and an unaffected meekness; with a generous absence of all revengeful feeling, and with a dignified disdain of making false pretences to innocence, which mingle so much admiration with our pity that we are inclined to become incredulous of all that can depreciate her. But her conduct before her royalty, her speeches on her trial, her various letters, and her last effusion on the scaffold display altogether such a power of natural intellect, and interior greatness, without noise or effort, and amid all her imperfection, that we cannot but regret that the seductions of a royal court, the habits of a gross age, and the dissolving voluptuousness of a luxurious society, should have undermined that virtue in her, or have lessened its sanctity which is every where the sweetest charm of those who, when in all their perfections, form the most lovely class of beings which has yet adorned and blessed our earthly creation in visible reality. . . . Henry's conduct on this occasion displayed the vindictive resentment of the mortified husband. It was pride and passion obeying the dishonouring impulses of an unmanly revenge."

Sanders, a hostile writer, states that Anna Boleyn was "unrivalled in the gracefulness of her attire and the fertility of her invention in devising new patterns, which were imitated by all the court belles by whom she was regarded as the glass of fashion." The same author adds, "beauty and sprightliness sat on her lips; in readiness of repartee, skill in the dance, and in play-

ing on the lute, she was unsurpassed." Wyatt, the poet, is rapturous in his commendations of Anna's musical skill, and the exquisite sweetness of her voice, both in singing and in speaking. In the spirit of a lover, the courtly poet, when he mentions the malformation of the little finger of her left hand, on which there was a double nail, with something like an indication of another little finger, he observes, "but that which in others might have been regarded as a defect, was to her an occasion of additional grace by the skilful manner in which she concealed it from observation⁵." Her "golden hair" has been described by contemporaries and others, yet her kinsman, Reginald Pole, alleges that her hair was a "jet black; and that at times she appeared to suffer from asthma."

Anna Boleyn was a marvellous scholar for her time; well versed in French and Spanish, and it is said she also knew Latin. Like her brother, Lord Rochford, she had some poetic talent; and it is alleged she wrote a few pathetic stanzas after her condemnation. (See Crow's Collection of English Poetry, where the lines attributed to her are to be found).

It is generally supposed that Anna Boleyn was born about 1501, at Bricklin Hall, in Norfolk, which leaves her thirty-six years of age at the time of execution. She had been maid of honour to four Queens—namely, Mary and Claude, Queens of France, Margaret of Navarre, and Katherine, Queen of England.

In the first volume of Mr. Froude's History, p. 163, he enters into the "early history" of Anna Boleyn, and combats many of the statements on record with

⁵ Miss Strickland's "Queens of England," vol. ii., p. 576.

respect to her character, but he establishes nothing to support his views of the authorities who impugned her conduct in youth. "The conduct of Anna Boleyn," he observes, "was unhappily linked with those of men to whom the greatest work ever yet accomplished in this country was committed; and the characters of a king of England and of the three estates of the realm are compromised in the treatment which she received from them." Tenderness for royal and legislative reputation should not involve lack of impartiality. Why pass over the unmanly conduct of Henry and the "three estates" which constituted his footstools? And why, too, link Anna's name with the erection of Protestantism? She would have been shortened by a head far earlier than she was, if she had adventured to propel a new creed as proselytiser or as proselyte. When Cranmer was celebrating mass was not a promising time for a woman in Anna Boleyn's position to adopt a belief, so many of whose disciples her dangerous husband had, like the Pagan god, begotten and then devoured.

After making the case of Henry as strong as eloquent but unsupported statement could render it, and dwelling upon the "perplexing circumstances of the case," Mr. Froude observes, in vol. ii., pp. 499-500 :—

"To this end the Queen had come at last, and silence is the best comment which charity has to offer upon it. Better far it would have been if the dust, had been allowed to settle down over the grave of Anna Boleyn, and her remembrance buried in forgetfulness. Strange it is that a spot which ought to have been sacred to pity should have been made the arena for the blind wrestling of controversial duellists. Blind, I call it,

for there has been little clearness of judgment, little even of common prudence in the choice of sides. If the Catholics could have fastened the stain of murder on the King and the statesmen of England, they would have struck the faith of the Establishment a harder blow than by a poor tale of scandal against a weak, erring, suffering woman; and the Protestants, in mistaken generosity, have courted an infamy for the names of those to whom they owe their being, which, staining the fountain, must stain for ever the stream which flows from it. It has been no pleasure to me to rake among the evil memories of the past, to prove a human being sinful whom the world has ruled to have been innocent. Let the blame rest with those who have forced upon our history the alternative of a re-assertion of the truth, or the shame of noble names which have not deserved it at our hands?"

We should not desire to be judged by equity like this. Protestants are to condone or ignore murder because the indirect founder of their creed committed it. Mr. Froude would have no "ill birds in the orthodox nest;" and therefore at once advises an universal acceptance of the King's innocence. The very charges were their own beliers; the monstrosity of some of them was incredible. As we are left without Mr. Froude's proofs for the King's exoneration, we must ascribe his advocacy to the consideration that the man who has, however collaterally, originated a great institution should be great in every thing. Now, Thevet, whose sources of information were unquestionable, avers that one of the many terrible exhibitions of remorse which rendered awful the dying bed of Henry, was caused by what he himself designated "the murder

of Anna Boleyn." If Henry possessed the beatitudes ascribed to him by Mr. Froude, why died he "like the fallen?" Verily his end was not one of peace.

Some recent writers have described the Boleyn family as "earnest Reformers;" but Lord Wiltshire, his wife, and daughter (Anna Boleyn) were only of the principles of the King. They partook of his fiscal hatred to the Papacy whilst they in their hearts doubted no tenet of its creed, which they believed, however, without practising. Oldmixon avers that King Henry was, in every thing in which his worldly interest was not concerned, "as arrant a Papist as Gardiner or Bonner." The Boleyn family, who lived on the Royal breath, were of course no more genuine in their procedure. Lingard sets down the whole stock "as willing at all times to accept their theology from the King;" but when Anna's life-dream was over, olden sentiments returned, and, dying in health, cruelly slain by her capricious master, she vindicated the power of conviction which the slower dissolution of her royal slayer was unable to afford to him. To the philosophic and unprejudiced mind, her death must seem the brightest phase of her existence, whilst Henry's exit was but the lingering flicker of a long-consuming lamp which threw a sombre glare upon a baffled and unrepenting profligate.

Anna Boleyn's father, Lord Wiltshire, was named as one of her judges, and he was present. The majority of votes decided the verdict, but there is no record extant of how he voted. Judging, however, from his subsequent position at Court, it is more than probable he voted for his daughter's death. He was quite capable of such an action. In 1529 he was created Earl of Wiltshire in England, and of Ormond in Ireland.

In the "Carew State Papers" (Brewer and Bullen) may be found an account of his management of an ill-gotten Irish estate.

In July 1536, Elizabeth, then only three years old, was as completely out of favour with her father as the Lady Mary, after her temporary reconciliation on the death of Anna Boleyn. On the 21st of the above month, Mary writes from Hunsdon a plaintive letter to the King, imploring his merciful consideration for herself and her little sister, who were "meanly lodged and poorly clothed," and watched over incessantly by the new Queen's (Jane Seymour's) friends. The following allusion to Elizabeth shows the kindly feeling that Mary entertained for her, and the courage she must have possessed even to name her to the King. In the letter alluded to, Lady Mary writes: "My sister Elizabeth is in good health; and such a child as I doubt not but your Highness shall have cause to rejoice of in time to come." From this time until the Lady Elizabeth reached her fourteenth year, her life presents little worth chronicling, for she remained unnoticed in the pursuit of her studies; and truly she must have been an apt and avid acquirer of learning, to judge by her attainments.

JANE SEYMOUR, THE FAVOURITE OF BOTH PARTIES.

THE next most prominent person entering upon the scene at this epoch was Jane Seymour, another reputed Protestant Queen. Of this personage, whose real character and sentiments have been so incorrectly depicted by many writers, Miss Strickland observes with severity but justice:—

“ Jane Seymour was the ‘ fairest, the discreetest, and the most meritorious of all Henry’s wives.’ This assertion has been generally repeated by all historians to the present hour; yet, doubtless, the question has frequently occurred to their readers, in what did her merit consist? Customs may vary at various eras, but the laws of moral justice are unalterable. Difficult would it be to reconcile them with the first actions of this discreet lady, for discretion is the attribute the biographer of Henry VIII., Lord Herbert, peculiarly challenges as her own. It has been shown, that Jane Seymour’s shameless conduct, in receiving the courtship of Henry VIII., was the commencement of the severe calamities that befel her mistress (Anna Boleyn). Scripture points out as an especial odium the circumstance of a hand-maid taking the place of her mistress. Odious enough was the case when Anna Boleyn supplanted the right royal Katherine of Arragon, but a sickening feeling of horror must pervade every right-feeling mind, when the proceedings of the ‘ discreet’ Jane Seymour are considered. She received the addresses of her mistress’s husband, knowing him to be such; she passively beheld the mortal anguish of Anna Boleyn, when that unhappy Queen was in a state which peculiarly demanded feminine sympathy; she knew that the discovery of Henry’s inconstancy had nearly destroyed her; the shock actually destroyed her infant; she saw a series of murderous accusations got up against the Queen, which finally brought her to the scaffold: yet she gave her hand to the regal ruffian before his wife’s corpse was cold. Yes! four-and-twenty hours had not elapsed since the sword was reddened with the blood of her mistress, when Jane

Seymour became the bride of Henry. And let it be remembered that a royal marriage could not have been celebrated without previous preparation, which must have proceeded simultaneously with the heart-rending events of Anna Boleyn's last agonizing hours. The wedding-cakes must have been baking, the wedding-clothes preparing, while the life-blood was yet running warm in the veins of the victim, whose place was to be rendered vacant by a violent death. The tragedy is repulsive enough, but it becomes tenfold more abhorrent when the woman who caused it is loaded with panegyrisms⁶."

Jane Seymour was the eldest of the eight children of Sir John Seymour, of Wolf Hall, Wiltshire. The Seymours were a family of country gentry, who like most holders of manorial rights, traced their ancestry to a Norman origin. It is alleged that the Seymours were of royal blood, from an "intermarriage with a daughter of Hotspur." Heralds differ on this question; and it is now a subject of very little importance. Of the early youth of Jane no particulars have reached us, "but there is reason to suppose," writes Miss Strickland, "that, like Anna Boleyn, her education was finished, and her manners formed at the Court of France. Her portrait in the Louvre as a French maid of honour, has given rise to this idea." The portrait of Jane Seymour in the Louvre represents her as a full-formed maiden of eighteen or nineteen years of age, with a face of exquisite loveliness—just such a face as Holbein delighted to portray; but tradition says the painter falls short of

⁶ Miss Strickland's "Queens of England," Vol. iii.

Nature's performance. The picture is entitled "Maid of Honour to Marie d'Angleterre, Queen of Louis XII." and placed as companion to another, a superb whole-length of Anna Boleyn, entitled "Maid of Honour to the Queen of Louis XII." The two portraits are clad in the same costume, though varied in ornament and colour; they are not recognized in Paris as pictures of "English Queens," but as *compagnons suivantes* of an English princess, who became Queen of France—Henry VIII.'s sister, Mary.

Nothing of interest occurred in the history of Jane Seymour, until Anna Boleyn discovered the growing passion of her husband for Jane, and the encouragement given to his addresses by her deceptive hand-maiden. Matters must have gone on in secret for some months, yet the unfortunate Anna does not seem to have gained any clue to the plot which was laid for her destruction.

While Anna Boleyn was waiting the day of her execution, her husband wrote the following note to Jane Seymour :—

" My dear Friend and Mistress,

" The bearer of these few lines from thy entirely devoted servant, will deliver into thy fair hands a token of my true affection for thee, hoping you will keep it for ever in your sincere love for me. Advertising you that there is a ballad made lately of great derision against us, which if it go abroad and is seen by you, I pray you to pay no manner of regard to it. I am not at present informed who is the setter forth of this malignant writing, but if he is found out he shall be straitly punished for it.

" For the things ye lacked I have minded ' my Lord'

to supply them to you as soon as he could buy them. Thus hoping shortly to receive you in these arms, I end for the present.

“Your own loving servant and sovereign,

“H. R.⁷”

“My Lord,” alluded to in the last passage, is undoubtedly the Earl of Wiltshire, steward of the household, and the unnatural father of Anna Boleyn.

“The Catholic historians,” writes Miss Strickland, “have mentioned Queen Jane with complacency on account of her friendliness to Henry’s ill-treated daughter; the Protestants regard her with veneration as the mother of Edward the Sixth, and the sister of Somerset, and thus, with little personal merit, accident has made her the subject of unlimited party praise. Her kindness to Mary bears an appearance of moral worth, if the suspicion did not occur that it arose entirely from opposition to Anna Boleyn⁸.”

A few days before the death of Anna Boleyn, Jane Seymour returned to her father’s residence in Wiltshire, where preparations were making for the marriage to take place the *day after the execution* of Anna⁹. It is stated that Henry remained in the neighbourhood of London on the day of the execution, and that, “at the firing of a gun as a signal,” he cried “Ha, ha! the deed is done;” “uncouple the hounds, and let us away to the chase!” This story is improbable, for that night, “about dusk, he reached Wolf Hall, where the bride-elect, and a numerous and distinguished company”

⁷ Halliwell’s “Letters of the Kings of England,” Vol. i., p. 353.

⁸ “Queens of England,” Vol. iii., p. 10.

⁹ Lord Herbert’s “Life of Henry VIII.,” Miss Strickland’s “Queens of England,” Vol. iii.

received him! It is certain, however, that on the following morning, not twenty-four hours as stated, but twenty hours after his wife's murder, he married Jane Seymour¹. Several of the "unblemished nobles" were present at the wedding, and congratulated the King "on all that occurred." Sir John Russell—of infamous memory—told the King that he "was the godliest person present." He then was so indecorous as to draw a contrast between the "personal appearance of the bride and Anna Boleyn." A great feast was given by Sir John Seymour, and the royal party proceeded after dinner to Mardell, near Winchester, a country seat belonging to the Bishops of that See, which the King had some time previously seized. At Mardell, the royal party resided a few days, and then repaired to London to receive the congratulations of the citizens.

"Nine days after the execution and marriage," Jane Seymour was presented to the citizens of London as their Queen; and, it is stated, she received as good a reception as that once awarded to her unfortunate predecessor. The parliament expressed their valuable good wishes, and Chancellor Audley made a "long and tedious oration." "Ye well remember," said he, "the great anxieties and perturbations your invincible sovereign suffered on account of his first unlawful marriage; so all ought to bear in mind the perils and dangers he was under when he contracted his second marriage, and that the Lady Anne and her accomplices have since been justly found guilty of high treason, and had met their due reward for it. What man of middle life would not this deter from marrying a third time? Yet this our

¹ Britton's "Wiltshire;" Milner's "Worcester."

most illustrious and virtuous prince, again condescendeth to contract matrimony; and hath, on the *humble petition of the nobility*, taken unto himself a wife this time, whose age and fine form give promise of issue²." Audley concluded his speech by proposing that the lords offer up "prayers for heirs to the crown by this marriage."

The "humble petition of the nobility," asking the King to marry a third time, must have been presented—if at all—during the life-time of Anna Boleyn, and some months before she was arrested. Perhaps, when the "unblemished nobles," as Mr. Froude styles them, noticed the King's passion for Jane Seymour, which was about the time Anna Boleyn discovered her husband's miniature in Jane Seymour's bosom, and, in a passionate struggle to wrest it from her "false friend," hurt her own finger³.

Jane Seymour's public entry into London did not, in many points, equal in magnificence that of either of her predecessors. The coronation procession of Katherine was worthy of the occasion, and remarkable for the quaint splendour of its details. The citizens were bent upon making the finest possible display: Cornhill may be said to have been enveloped in cloth of gold, and the streets were lined at each side by children dressed in holiday attire; the windows were filled with the wives and daughters of the wealthy burghers, displaying the riches of the merchant princes in the gorgeousness of their wardrobes, and the roofs of the houses were occupied by musicians and singers. From Cornhill and

² Record of Audley's Speeches. Miss Strickland's "Queens of England," Vol. iii.

³ Heylin; Fuller's "English Worthies," p. 84.

Old Change, young maidens habited in snowy white, and bearing in their hands palms of "blanched wax," were ranged along the route extending towards Westminster. These damsels were formed in ranks by friars wearing their various coloured robes and collars, who, from silver censers, emitted a cloud of incense upon the Queen's procession as it glided along in slow and solemn pace. Anthems and hymns were sung by young ladies along the line; and, when they ceased at intervals, the refrain was taken up by the outside populace, whose cheers stirred all the echoes of the old city, and were repeated with a will by the onlookers from window and housetop. Miss Strickland remarks that of all the pageants ever devised for royalty, the scenes at the coronation procession of Queen Katherine excited sentiments "the most ideal." Lord Herbert gives a fervid description of the intellectual gifts and personal charms of Katherine at the time of her marriage with Henry. After describing the procession he writes:—"The Queen and her ladies were objects of general admiration. She was attired as a bride⁴, in white embroidered satin: her hair, which was very beautiful, hung at length down her back, almost to her feet; she wore on

⁴ Hall, Speed, Burnet, and other writers do not mention, if they knew, where Henry and Katherine were married, two days before the above procession. According to the Middle-Hill MSS. they were married at Greenwich. It may be added that Katherine's "boy-husband," Arthur, died of the plague at Ludlow, in Shropshire, then a portion of Wales, about six months after their marriage, at which time even he was in a prostrate condition of health. He was buried on the right side of the chancel of Worcester Cathedral. The reader will find in Leland's "Collectanea," some curious incidents connected with young Arthur's funeral, and the terrors excited by the fell disease, of which the prince and so many thousands of the people became victims.

her head a coronal set with precious stones. The Queen thus habited as a royal bride, was seated in a litter of white cloth of gold, borne by four white horses with magnificent appointments. Then followed the young maidens of the nobility and other notables, drawn in richly ornamented vehicles styled ‘whirlicotes.’”

To return to Jane Seymour. Her career was brief. When the time of her confinement arrived, the doctors asked the King, “whether he wished his wife or the infant to be saved?” to which his Highness replied in a characteristic speech: “The child by all means, for other wives can be easily found⁵!” The mother died in fourteen days—another instance of retributive justice.

Miss Strickland wishes to remove the opinion so long held by Protestants as to the real religious sentiments of Jane Seymour. “All the rites of the Roman Catholic Church were administered to her; the official statements are still extant, and prove how greatly mistaken those writers are, who considered Jane Seymour as a Protestant⁶.” Sir Richard Gresham, writing to Lord Cromwell concerning the Queen’s obsequies, said:—

“I have caused twelve hundred masses to be offered up for the soul of our most gracious Queen. And whereas the lord mayor and aldermen were lately at Paul’s, and there gave thanks unto God for the birth of our prince, I think it right that there should also be a solemn dirge and high mass, and that the mayor and aldermen should pray and offer up divers prayers for her grace’s soul⁷.”

In subsequent years young Edward spoke of his

⁵ Sanders, p. 89.

⁶ “Queens of England,” Vol. iii., p. 21.

⁷ State Papers, Vol. i., p. 574.

mother as a "sainted woman." Did Somerset tell him "she was a Protestant or a Catholic saint?" Or did Craumer furnish him with a list of the number of masses he himself celebrated for her Highness? Or the amount of money in "golden angels" the Treasurer paid the Archbishop for celebrating mass for the dead queen?

The most blasphemous and slavish compliments were paid to Henry on the birth of a son; but that of Latimer, then simulating and swearing by the profession of profound Catholicity, is the most fearful. He addressed Lord Cromwell in this style:—

"Right honourable lord, we salute in Christ Jesu. And here, my lord, is no less joying and rejoicing in those parts (Worcester) for the birth of our prince, who we prayed for so long, than there was, I trow, by the neighbours at the birth of John the Baptist, as this bearer, Maister Evance, can tell you. God give us grace to yield due thanks to our Lord God, the God of England, or rather an English God, if we consider and ponder well all His proceedings with us from time to time. He hath overcome all our illness with His exceeding goodness, so that we are now more compelled to serve Him, and seek His glory, and promote His word, if the devil of all devils be not in us. We have now the stock of vain trusts, the stay of vain expectations; let us all pray for his preservation. And I, for my part, well wish that his grace (the King) will always have, and even now from the beginning, governors, instructors, and officers, of right judgement. But what a great *fowll* (fool) am I! So that devotion showeth at times, but little discretion. And thus the God of England be ever with you in all your proceed-

ings^s." So, then, according to this orthodox prelate, the worship of God is to be graduated by auspicious royal events ! Yet Latimer is set down as a " martyr."

There are to be found in the State Papers the addresses of several other Bishops to Henry at this time which are freer from blasphemy, but remarkable for their servility, as was the fashion with too many.

The baptism of young Edward, which took place by torchlight at Hampton Court Palace, was performed with all the solemnity of the Catholic Church. Many of the notables who took part in it changed sides in the next reign. Amongst the historical groups present at the baptism there appeared an aged man who carried a " taper of virgin wax " in his hand, and was an object of contemptuous pity to every eye : that man was the father of the murdered Anna Boleyn—Lord Wiltshire ! Two years subsequently, in 1538, having worn out his character, reputation, and honour to the very last thread, he expired, amidst the world's contempt,—
" unwept, unhonoured, and unsung."

Strong complaints were made that Queen Jane in all possible ways strove to depress and insult the connexions and friends of her late mistress, and to exalt the Seymours⁹. " Of course," observes Miss Strickland, " the power of so doing was the chief inducement for her marriage, with all its abhorrent circumstances. Her brothers, uncles, sisters, and cousins, quickly filled every lucrative office at Court." No doubt they did ; for of all the courtiers of those most evil times, there were none so insolent and rapacious as the unprincipled Seymours, who readily bartered

^s State Papers.

⁹ See Hearn's " Sylloge," for a proof of this statement.

honour and religion for worldly gain. The father of Jane Seymour petitioned King Henry to confer on his daughter the office of maid of honour to Anna Boleyn, which supplies a fair idea of the sort of father Sir John Seymour must have been. The daughter improved upon her parent's speculative forethought. She took for her motto when Queen, "Bound to obey and to serve." Completely devoid of soul, but of wonderful coolness and caution, she acted on the principle of "self and family." She supported her burden of dignity as Queen with silent placidity. She appeared to have adopted the very opposite policy of her predecessor. She avoided sallies of wit and repartee, which sometimes made enemies for Anna Boleyn. Her biographer remarks, "that her actions were utterly passive, and dependent on the will of the King." As a queen Consort she did no harm; but there is not one generous or good action recorded of her. She did not know how to perform a grand or queenly office; and divested of fine robes, and regal honours, she was merely a handsome woman of no ability, and of no pretence even to the possession of a heart. Such is a true sketch of one who has been made by writers the heroine of both parties—Catholic and Protestant.

Some authorities have been omitted by accident in the early chapters of this work. For instance, the passages relating to the moral character of Wolsey, and his subsequent deathbed, were translated from a Spanish book entitled "*The Great English Cardinal*," by Carlo Fernando Logerio, who resided in London at that period, for some twenty years. He was a physician, and well acquainted with the inner life of Wolsey,

whom he represented as being "most virtuous in his private mode of life." As to the chapter on the Carthusians, the narrative is in part derived from Maurice Chauncey's account of the sufferings of his brethren. The narrative is in Latin, and was printed in France, in 1550, with the lives of More, and Fishér, in a work entitled "*Historia Martyrum Angliæ*," by Ritus Dulken, prior of Mount St. Michael, near Metz. It has been "republished and dressed up" by Burnet, Speed, Strype, and many later writers.

THE RESULTS OF LORD CROMWELL'S POLICY.—

THE PILGRIMS OF GRACE.

THE innovations and confiscations of the Crown, roused the angry feeling of the Northern population; they beheld their old friends of the monastic houses "drifting to ruin;" the monks and nuns who supplied them with bread, meat, and clothing in seasons of scarcity or adversity, were now reduced to seek a meal from those whom they had formerly fostered and cherished; and the people regarded them so much that they divided with them their scanty meal; "nuns were found dead on the road-side from the effects of cold and hunger, and many of them aged women who had spent their lives in ministering to the wants of the poor;" the abbot, the abbess, the friar, or the "wise old nun¹," who settled village disputes, who reconciled the rude husband and his gentle wife; who impressed upon children the obligations and the

¹ Sister Mary of the Cistercian Convent at Cotham, in Lincolnshire. She was grand-daughter of Charles Olgate, physician to Elizabeth of York, before her marriage to Henry VII. In Fitzherbert's quaint chronicle, it is recorded that this venerable lady died in 1561, in her ninety-second year, and in a state of destitution.

duties they owed to God, their parents, and their country ; who reminded youthful manhood of the position it should hold, and its career ; the maidens, the importance of their mission as the future mothers of an honest and virtuous race. The local friends of the people—their councillors and benefactors, were now despoiled ; and anarchy and insurrection followed. Some monks and friars joined the standard of revolt ; and the nobles and gentry who complained that they were deprived of the “*corrodies*” reserved to them by the charters of the founders, likewise joined the popular movement.

The Archbishop of York, the Lords Darcy, Neville, Lundy, and Latimer, and many knights and gentlemen, joined the insurgents. The people of Lincolshire were the first to appear in arms ; and Charles Duke of Suffolk, who was sent down to “*despatch them at once,*” thought discretion preferable to temerity, and made proposals for a negotiation ; he wished to know what they had to complain of ; the complaints were numerous, but might be reduced to a few : the suppression of the monasteries, “*which had made the poor man poorer than he had ever been before ;*” of the Statute of Uses, in relation to the transfer of land ; of the introduction to the King’s Council of Thomas Cromwell and Maister Rich ; they described Cromwell as a low-born man, once a robber in foreign parts, and then a robber in England ; and Rich as a dicer and a false-swearer ; they protested against the appointment of Cranmer to the See of Canterbury, and Poynt to that of Rochester, stating that the chief object of those men was to suppress the olden religion of England ; Cranmer and Poynt seem to have been extremely unpopular with.

the "Pilgrims." The King gave a vague promise to redress the people's grievances, and grant a general pardon; but his agents soon caused dissension in the people's camp, which led to failure. In five other counties the movement became formidable. From the borders of Scotland to the Lune and the Humber, the people bound themselves by a solemn oath, to "stand together for the love which they bore to Almighty God, His faith, the Holy Church, and the maintenance thereof; to the preservation of the King's person and his issue; to the purifying of the nobility; and to expel all 'vilain blood,' and evil councillors from the King's presence; not for any private profit, nor to do displeasure to any private person, nor to slay or murder, through envy, but for the restitution of the Church, and the suppression of heretics and their opinions." The men who took part in this enterprise adopted the quaint title, "Pilgrims of Grace." On their banners were painted the image of Christ crucified, and the chalice and Host, the emblems of their belief; and wherever they appeared the monks and nuns were restored to their former residences. The proceedings of the Pilgrims in some instances were characterised by violence, but upon the whole, they refrained from disorders. Hull, York, and Pontefract declared in favour of the disaffected. Robert Aske, a gentleman of ancient lineage, at the head of thirty thousand men entered Doncaster; here they were soon afterwards confronted by the Duke of Norfolk, and the Earl of Shrewsbury, with some ten thousand disciplined troops, cannon, and all the appliances of war; but a "sudden swell" in the river causing delay, the Pilgrims of Grace became disheartened; they again

sought for an armistice, which was granted by the Duke of Norfolk, in order to give time to bring up fresh forces, and, in the interval, excite dissension in the insurgent camp. In this scheme he succeeded. The King, however, thought proper to send a written answer to the complaints of the Pilgrims of Grace; and gave authority to the Duke to treat with them, granting a "full pardon to all but ten—six named and four un-named." This exception caused each of the leaders to fear for his own safety; the Pilgrims rejected the terms. Another negotiation was opened, which was participated in by a large number of the clergy who met at Pontefract. Amongst the fresh demands made on the King were, "that heretical books should be suppressed; that heretical Bishops and laymen of the same mind should either be punished according to law, or decide the question with the Pilgrims of Grace in a brave, fair fight on the field of battle; that the Statute of Uses, and Treason of Wards, with those which abolished the Papal authority, bastardized the Princess Mary, suppressed the monasteries, and gave to the King the tenths and first-fruits of benefices, should be repealed; that Lord Cromwell, Chancellor Audley, and Maister Rich, should be tried as subverters of the law and maintainers of heresy; that Legh and Layton, the monastic commissioners to the northern district, should be prosecuted for extortion, peculation, and other abominable acts." The King and his Council rejected the petition with contempt. "I marvel," writes his Highness to the Pilgrims, "that such ignorant churls as you are should presume to talk of theological subjects to me, who is so noted in learning of that kind; or that you should complain of my laws, as if,

after the experience of eight-and-twenty years, I did not know how to govern this fair kingdom of mine; or that you should oppose the suppression of the monasteries. Is it not better, therefore, to relieve and aid me, as the Head of the Church, than to support the slothful and wicked monks²?"

And again he says, "You can no more give judgment with regard to government than a blind man can as to colours. We, with our whole council, think it strange that ye, who are but brutes, and inexpert folk, do take upon you to lecture us as to what is right or wrong."

In another letter the King seems to look on the Northern rising as a serious affair, for he tells the people "how much he loves them;" that the "humblest of his subjects could have access to his royal person and state their grievances, which were sure to be redressed." Who so bold amongst the "brutes" as to seek redress? *Nulla vestigia retrorsum* with Henry.

Time, so valuable to all popular risings, having been lost by the Pilgrims, in marching, counter-marching, and bootless diplomacy, whilst it was utilized on the other hand by the Royal General, the Duke of Norfolk having his army recruited at once marched into the heart of the country, spreading terror and devastation far and near. Norfolk's remorseless activity was met with hesitation, want of generalship, and consequent panic amongst the Pilgrims, whose once grand array seemed to melt like a morning mist. The enterprise met with the fate of all armed remonstrances, where the masses negotiate before they conquer. Kings

² Despatches in State Papers of Henry VIII.

regard opposition from their subjects, no matter how justly based, as treason, graduated merely by the strength of the traitors, and too often the equity of a people's demands has enhanced the severity which followed their overthrow. The leaders were soon arrested.

In Lord Darcy's petition to the King he says:—"I beg to have confession, and at mass to receive my Maker, that I may depart in peace from this vale of misery; that incontinent after my death my whole body may be buried with my late wife, Anne Neville." Also that his debts might be paid out of his own property. Aske and others petitioned that their families "might not be reduced to poverty and ruin." How far such requests were attended to by Lord Cromwell it is unnecessary to inquire. Some of the Pilgrims acted in a half-hearted spirit on their trial, but most of them were firm, and at the scaffold behaved in a manner worthy of men whose fathers were famed in the wars of the Plantagenets; but, with that proud feeling which was often evinced by the old historic families of England, they protested against being stigmatized as rebels; they placed themselves in the position of "defenders of the olden religion of the country," which, they argued, was older than any monarchy in Europe. They were still loyal to his Highness; but their loyalty to the Papal Church could only be extinguished in their blood. The scenes which took place throughout the country attested the truth of their declarations; for no men ever died at the hands of the headsman with greater moral courage, veneration, and love for the creed of their forefathers than did the leaders of the Pilgrims of Grace.

In York, Hull, Carlisle, and Pontefract some five hundred persons were hanged, amongst whom were

many monks and friars. The scenes of slaughter ended with "hanging by court-martial," in which the Duke of Norfolk made himself remarkable for cruelty to the peasantry by "hanging upon the trees a score of men in every village he passed along." The poor unlettered peasantry died like heroes, but "without benefit of clergy." The "old nobles" were friendly to the Pilgrims of Grace, and it is even alleged that the Duke of Norfolk "secretly wished them well." No action of his life, however, supplies credence to such an opinion. If he was a "chivalrous courtier," he always chose the strongest side, whereby his interests were best promoted. A despatch of his from Welby throws some light on what manner of man the "hero of Flodden Field" really was. He says:—"By any means, fair or foul, I will crush the rebels (the Pilgrims); I will esteem no promise that I make to them, *nor think my honour touched in the violation of the same*³." Yet historians have run riot in praise of the honour and humanity of this self-acknowledged violator of both virtues.

There was no lack of enthusiasm or bravery on the part of the Northern Pilgrims, and they had a powerful incentive to persevere in the fact that the royal army were supposed to be disaffected, both officers and men, who abhorred the King's Council, especially Lord Cromwell. Nevertheless, the Pilgrim generals lost their opportunities, perhaps through the incapacity of Lord Darcy, who, whilst he acted with them, abhorred the name of rebel; yet both parties have accused him of treachery, but he was not guilty, and the infirmities of old age should plead for him in that respect. The King

³ State Papers, vol. i. p. 519.

was not disliked by the Pilgrims, and they did not really wish to fight against him, but they entertained a mortal enmity to his ministers. In their marchings and counter-marchings the Pilgrims of Grace aroused a strong Papal feeling. On Wednesday, October 25, they had marched from Pomfret in three divisions. Sir Thomas Percy, at the head of five thousand men well armed, carried the banner of St. Cuthbert. Maister Aske and Lord Darcy came next, commanding ten thousand men. Emblems of the olden creed were as profuse as they might have been amongst the Crusaders. Then advanced a body of twelve thousand horse, well mounted and appointed, all in rich armour. This splendid body of cavalry had in its ranks the knights, the esquires, and the yeomen of Richmondshire and Durham, as brave and fine a body of Englishmen as ever rode to battle-field for creed or fatherland. Sir Marmaduke Constable says:—"We were thirty thousand men, tall men, well-horsed, and well-appointed as any man could be." This statement is corroborated by the government despatches and other State documents.

"Such a gathering" (that of the Pilgrims), writes Mr. Froude, "had not been seen in England since the grandfathers of those same men fought on Touton moor, and the Red Rose of Lancaster faded before the summer sun of York. With few exceptions, all the great families of the North were in confederacy with the Pilgrims. The Earl of Westmoreland was represented by Lord Neville; Lord Latimer was with them in person; also Lords Darcy, Lumley, Scrope, and Conyers, likewise the ancient family of Constable; the Tempests, the Boweses, the Brydges, the Fairfaxes (not yet Puritan), the Strangways, the Danbys, the St. Johns, the Bulmers,

the Lascelles, the Nortons, the Moncktons, the Gowers, the Ingoldsbys—in fact, almost every family known and recorded in border story was represented amongst the Pilgrims of Grace.” These men were very unlike the King’s description of the insurgents—“ignorant churls and brutes.” The Earl of Northumberland, although sympathizing with the cause, refused to draw his sword against the King. The Pilgrims again demanded his co-operation, but he was not to be won by clamour. He refused. They indignantly cried out to their leaders, “Strike off the proud Earl’s head, and make Sir Thomas Percy the Lord of yonder castle.” Lying on his death-bed the Earl calmly replied to their messenger, “Then let them strike off my head. I can die but once, and it will rid me of the pain I am suffering.” “And therewith he fell weeping and wishing himself out of the world.” The better feeling of the Pilgrims, however, prevailed; they retired from before the castle walls of the border chief, and left him to meet death in peace.

Lord Darcy, Aske, Constable, Bigod, the Abbots of Fountains and Jervaulx, Sir John Bulmer, Lord Lumley’s son, Tempest, and thirteen others of ancient family, were arraigned and condemned to death in London. Some were executed at Tyburn; others at York and Hull. Lady Bulmer was consigned to the flames at Smithfield by a special Tudor code, which condemned women to the stake, “with its worst tortures,” if they committed high treason. Lady Bulmer died like a heroic woman. “I have,” said she, “come here to die for the old religion of England; I have nothing to regret; and I rejoice and thank God that I am given an opportunity of offering up my life for the true faith of Jesus.” Lord Darcy

4 “Woodville’s Anecdotes of the Pilgrims of Grace.”

was eighty-one years of age, yet he showed no terror when his fate was pronounced. When examined before the Privy Council, he turned on Lord Cromwell, "once his friend," and now, regardless of his enmity, he said:—"Crumel, it is thou that art the very special and chief causer of all this rebellion and mischief, and art likewise causer of the apprehension of us that be (the word here has faded away), and dost daily earnestly travel to bring us to our ends, and to strike off our heads; but I trust, that ere thou die, though thou wouldest procure all the noblemen's heads within the realm to be stricken off, yet shall there remain one head (and arm) that shall strike off thy head ⁵."

From the last terrible despatch of King Henry to the commander of his forces may be judged the kind of faith with which monarch and general had conducted the negotiations with an injured people:—"The further," writes Henry, "you wade in the investigation of the behaviour of those persons who called themselves religious, the more you shall detest the great number of them. Our pleasure is that, before you shall close up our banner again, you shall cause such dreadful execution to be done upon a number of the inhabitants of every town, village, and hamlet that have offended, as shall make a spectacle to others who might wish to offend hereafter. Finally, as all those troubles have been caused by the monks and canons of those parts, you shall, without pity, cause all the said monks and the said canons that in any wise have been faulty to be tied up without further delay or ceremony ⁶." Norfolk

⁵ This brief address of Darey is to be seen in a MS. at the Rolls House, and in Cromwell's own handwriting—thus inditing a premonition of his own fate.

⁶ State Papers of Henry VIII.'s reign.

needed no spur in his eager pursuit of blood, but he rejoiced in a royal mandate which gave him license in his sanguinary quest. He acted on his powers to the full. In two days he hanged seventy-four persons in Westmoreland and Cumberland. A large proportion of them were priests, some forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, and one eighty-six years of age. To this number may be added twelve abbots, who were hanged, drawn, and quartered⁷.

Such was the fate of those honest Englishmen who strove to defend with arms or voice the religion of their country and the institutions which so long flourished under its benign protection. They were neither traitors nor rebels, but truly conservative and patriotic in all their actions.

THOMAS CRANMER.

[First Part.]

WE now arrive at the history of the chief Apostle of the English Reformation.

The Cranmers had been settled in Nottinghamshire from early Norman times. From the position of farmers they in time became country squires; and several of the family held respectable positions both in the law and the Church. To the "Church and all its rights," the Cranmers were deeply attached.

On the 2nd of July, 1484, Thomas Cranmer was born at Aslacton, in the parish of Whatton, and county of Nottingham. He was the second son of Thomas and Mary Cranmer, and had an elder brother named

⁷ State Papers; Hume, vol. iii. (first edition); Woodville; Sharon Turner, vol. x.; Lingard, vol. iv.; Froude, vol. iii.

Edward, and four sisters. With pious maternal feeling, Mrs. Cranmer intended her two sons for the priesthood, but her plans were for a time thwarted by circumstances. Thomas was sent by his father to a "severe schoolmaster, whose cruelty stupefied many of the pupils; and made them timid and fearful creatures for life, looking on books as the introduction to every trouble to them." Ralph Morice stated that young Cranmer would never recover his natural manly feeling when he left his pedantic old schoolmaster¹.

"When at home," Maister Cranmer trained young Thomas to field sports, for which Tom had a liking, and "excelled his father." "Throughout life," says Morice, "Thomas would follow hawk and hound; and although short-sighted, he could take a good aim with the long bow." And when he became Archbishop of Canterbury, the game was carefully preserved on his manors, in order that he might the better enjoy the sport. He was a bold and skilful horseman; and in after life he was "ready to mount the horse which no groom in his stables could manage." Such is the picture drawn by one who was many years in daily intercourse with Cranmer.

The death of Maister Cranmer the elder, caused "some changes in the family." Young Thomas, then in his fourteenth year, was sent by his good mother to Cambridge; and there he became a member of Jesus College, to which he was attached for many years afterwards.

¹ Ralph Morice's "Anecdotes of Archbishop Cranmer." In Knight's "Life of Collet," and in the Letters of Erasmus, are to be found some relations of the "cruel and savage" actions of schoolmasters, who exacted by the birch the most servile homage from their pupils.

Cambridge at that time was in comparative obscurity compared to Oxford. The rise and progress of Cambridge are, perhaps, to be attributed to the residence thereat of Erasmus, and the munificence of his patron, Bishop Fisher. Dean Hook, in his "*Archbishops of Canterbury*," writes in fervent terms of the learning and the virtues which characterised Dr. Fisher. "To Bishop Fisher's transcendant virtues and noble qualities justice, through the party spirit of Puritanism, has never been done. He it was who appointed Erasmus to the chair of the Margaret Professor², and so great was Fisher's zeal in the cultivation of Greek literature, that, in his old age, he desired to place himself under Erasmus as a student of that language. With the generous assistance of the Lady Margaret, he did more than any other man in England to promote the cause of learning; and so wise and so judicious were his measures, that students in both the great Universities are, at the present hour, receiving food and raiment from funds which his royal mistress placed at his disposal. Such was the man whom Puritans generally loved to defame, because he would not fall down with the costly sacrifice of an upright conscience before King Henry VIII.³"

To return to the young student from Aslacton. Nothing is recorded of Cranmer's career in the University for years. He does not seem to have "mixed with the wild and boisterous students," but to have kept closely to his studies. No record of impropriety against

² The Countess of Richmond was the grandmother of Henry VIII.—a lady whose life was one unbroken series of piety and benevolence. She also took a lively interest in Oxford, and other homes of English education.

³ "*Archbishops of Canterbury*," vol. vi., p. 429.

him has been found, and he regularly corresponded with his family, to whom he seemed always devotedly attached. Although his mother wished him to become a priest, his tastes and studies were, like those of Wolsey, directed to civil law. Dean Hook states that for the quarter of a century during which he was resident in Cambridge, the name of Thomas Cranmer does not appear on the rolls of Cambridge. From letters of Erasmus we can see the character of many of his contemporaries; but though Cranmer lived almost in the same street as the great scholar, of Cranmer no mention is made. Erasmus had occasion to thank Cranmer, when the latter became an Archbishop, for some favour conferred upon him; but no allusion is made to any former acquaintance between them when both had been resident in the same university. Cranmer was considered one of the best writers of "pure English" of his time; yet, as a "translator from the classics," he never ranked among men of learning. His taste was decidedly for the law. Dean Hook thinks that, if he intended to become a priest, he would "scarcely have married." Through perseverance and hard work, doubtless, the law student became a Fellow of Jesus College in 1510-11. In taking this office he subscribed to the usual vows of celibacy. At this time he was on friendly terms with the family who owned the Dolphin Tavern, which was frequented almost solely by the *alumni* of the University. Stephen Gardiner was amongst the students who dined and supped at this hostelry; and Bonner and Edward Fox lodged also there at times.

Whether Cranmer's courtship with the innkeeper's niece was before or after he made vows of celibacy it is

now impossible to state. He, however, was discovered to be married when a fellow of the College, and was cited before the University authorities. Here he is said to have "acknowledged that he had violated his vows, and was then a married man." At this time he was twenty-seven years of age. He was expelled from the university as a matter of course, and was looked upon as "a bad man:" many persons then considering that it was fortunate he had not been ordained a priest. Those who still adhered to him, however, were of opinion that, as "a college gentleman, he degraded himself by marrying the barmaid of an inn." And others, who knew that "Joan, with the dark eyes and black hair," had a virtuous reputation, sympathized with him, when they heard of the match "being the pure temptations of a first love." Before the expiration of a year Cranmer was a widower, his wife having died in child-birth. There is a certain amount of mystery connected with this clandestine marriage which may never be revealed.

After the death of his wife Cranmer repaired to Aslacton, where he received a "cold reception from his friends." For some months he "appeared in a state of grief for the loss he had sustained, refusing even to join in his favourite amusement of the chase." He now unhappily resolved to pursue his studies for the priesthood; and with some family interest, aided by a "penitential petition," he was readmitted to his fellowship in Jesus College, renewing all his former vows. He then recurred to the study of divinity, and became a model (as Strype states) of "propriety, goodness, and piety," to the young gentlemen who were placed under his charge. He was the first in the chapel every morning, and the last to leave it. He commanded the respect

of the authorities of the University, yet he never succeeded in gaining the goodwill of the students, whilst he seemed scarcely to be known to the inhabitants of Cambridge. From a natural hesitation on the part of ecclesiastical authorities, Cranmer was not ordained a priest until 1523, being then in his thirty-ninth year. If the good Bishop Fisher or Archbishop Warcham were at that time connected with the University, this chance would never have been given to Cranmer of outraging all the received notions of the sanctity of clerical vows. Unfortunately, at the seats of learning, patronage had begun to make inroads in the footsteps of bequests, and lay influence was already working evil in matters with which it should have no concern.

After, as before, his ordination, Cranmer's existence remained unacknowledged by any of the prominent divines or statesmen of the times. He filled several offices in the University with sufficient credit to himself; but he never attained distinction as a scholar, or as an orator, although few doubted his astuteness. He was appointed a public examiner in the divinity school, although in theological knowledge he was deficient, as was afterwards proved when brought into combination with Gardiner, Bonner, and Tunstal. He, however, discharged the duties of his office to the satisfaction of his superiors, and is said to have been severe and strict, yet mild in enforcing discipline.

From the many authorities we have consulted as to Cranmer's first interview with King Henry, we select that of Dean Hook as the most correct :

“A quarter of a century had passed away since Cranmer's matriculation, and still he continued to be what we should now call a private tutor. He had under

his care two young men who were, through their mother, related to himself; when in 1528, the sweating sickness reappeared in the country, and committed havoc among the colleges of Cambridge. The filthy condition of the towns made each great city little better than a pest-house; and the inhabitants, when they had the means, rushed into the country; Dr. Cranmer, accompanied by his pupils, went to the house of their father, near Waltham. In the neighbourhood of Waltham the King had now fixed his abode. Alarmed at the death of two gentlemen of his Privy Chamber, and others among his courtiers, who, having sickened in the morning, were before sunset dead men, Henry had wandered from place to place, his temporary and lonely residence being indicated by fires lighted day and night, both to purify the atmosphere and to warn off intruders. But now the fierceness of the pestilence having abated, and his alarm being less exaggerated, he was settled at Tytynhanger, a house belonging to the Abbot of St. Alban's. Although public business had been at first suspended, and even the great subject which had occupied the minds of men (the divorce) had ceased for a time to be discussed, the King now began to direct his attention to state affairs, and summoned his Ministers to an occasional interview. They were, so to say, billeted upon the neighbouring monasteries and gentlemen's houses. Persons engaged on the King's business were able to command all services, and to make themselves at home in every house. At Mr. Cressy's house, Dr. Cranmer met two great men, Dr. Gardyner, the Secretary of State, and Dr. Edward Fox, the Lord High Almoner; the former historically known as Bishop Gardiner, from his elevation to the

See of Winchester; and the latter, in the course of time, becoming the Bishop of Hereford⁴. The divorce question became a subject of conversation, and Dr. Cranmer freely stated his opinion. Such contradictory statements have been made with reference to Cranmer's opinion upon the divorce question, that it is not easy, at first sight, to understand what his opinion really was. The view taken by Cranmer appears to me to be perfectly intelligible, and he adhered to it consistently from first to last. All parties were agreed at that time, that, although the Pope could grant a dispensation to supersede, for a particular occasion and purpose, a law of the Church, no Papal dispensation could extend to a law of God. The question, therefore, to be first decided was this—whether the law of God prohibited a marriage with a deceased brother's wife. It is sometimes supposed, that Cranmer suggested that this point should be submitted to the judgment of the canonists and the universities; but it is almost, if not quite certain, that this measure had been resolved upon, some time before Cranmer came on the scene⁵. The question, therefore, was, what steps should be taken in the event of the judgment of the canonists and universities being in the affirmative."

"Gardynner, Bonner, and men of that school, (continues Dean Hook,) would reply: '*Clement must be coerced to give a righteous judgment.*' . . . They held that the Pope ought to decide in favour of the King—that he should even be compelled to do so; but,

⁴ Parker; Ralph Morice; Strype's Memorials.

⁵ Cavendish ascribes to Wolsey the suggestion of a reference to the Universities; and Fiddes held the same opinion. Fiddes' Wolsey, p. 444.

until the Papal judgment was officially given, the King might not marry again⁶." After entering into a disquisition, according to canon law, as to the question at issue, Dean Hook returns to the party assembled at Mr. Cressy's. "When the party separated, Cranmer returned to his ordinary pursuits, and the superintendence of his pupils. Of the conversation between himself and Gardynier perhaps he thought no more, although he may have looked back with satisfaction to the honour he had received in being admitted to the society of men so eminent in station as were the Secretary of State and the Grand Almoner of the King. It was, however, with surprise that, soon after Cranmer's return to Cambridge, he received a summons to wait upon the King's Highness at Greenwich."

"It appeared afterwards (quoting Dean Hook) that in the course of some discussion with the King on the divorce case, the opinion of Dr. Cranmer was mentioned either by Stephen Gardynier, or by Edward Fox. Of Cranmer the King had never heard, not even the name, but the acuteness of his judgment was immediately recognized by the quick sagacity of Henry, who exclaimed 'Who is this Dr. Cranmer, where is he? Is he still at Waltham? Marry, I will speak to him; let him be sent for out of hand. This man, I trow, has got the right sow by the ear.' A mandate from Henry was not to be disobeyed. A few civil words uttered by royal lips have such a magic influence on a large class of minds, that royalty ought always to be popular, and Cranmer's was the kind of mind to be enslaved by royal condescension and kindness. The

⁶ Gardiner and Bonner, however, altered their "opinion" (or action), as the reader has already seen, at Dunstable.

King penetrated the character of the man at once. He spoke to him of *what he called his conscience*; and, forgetting that his Queen had a conscience too, he desired to be relieved from the burden by which he imagined himself to be distressed and perplexed. He had been informed that Cranmer had devised a plan, by which he might be extricated from his difficulties, and he prayed him as a favour to devote himself to the cause. Cranmer showed some reluctance to withdraw himself from literary pursuits, and to become the leading counsel in the pending law-suit, for this, in fact, was the King's proposal. This is apparent from the tone which the King now assumed. 'Maister Doctor,' said he, 'I pray you; and nevertheless, because you are a subject, I charge and command you all other business and affairs set apart, to take some pains in this my cause to be furthered by your devices, so that I may shortly understand wherenunto I may trust.' Upon Cranmer the task was now imposed of placing his argument on paper. He was enjoined to produce a treatise in which he was to be supported by the authority of Holy Scripture, of the General Councils, and of the Fathers. And now might Cranmer truly say:—'A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.' He is no longer writing in a dull, cold chamber, looking out on a darker quadrangle, or in a public library, where neither candle nor fire was permitted, but in the fine library of the Earl of Wiltshire, at Durham Place⁷, looking down upon the great thoroughfare of London, crowded with boats and barges of every description and size. The student had

⁷ The Adelphi, in the Strand, now occupies the site of the then Durham Place.

now become a courtier. Henry had reasons of his own for not lodging Cranmer at Greenwich, where, though the Queen still lived, the Lady Ann was the ruler, and ruled like a despot. The King commended Cranmer to the hospitality of Ann's father, the Earl of Wiltshire; a father not being then known as one of the basest of men. Here Cranmer was a sufficient distance from the royal residence, and, at the same time, near enough to admit of frequent conferences with the King. That such conferences took place is shown by the speech which Henry was reported to have made, to the effect that there was no difficulty which he was not ready to encounter, if he had only Thomas Cranmer at his elbow⁸."

Cranmer's star was now in the ascendant. The unknown Cambridge student suddenly became a Royal Chaplain; the Archdeaconship of Taunton, and other livings were conferred upon him—the recipient taking the emoluments, but performing no duties. He became the "caressed friend" of the Boleyns, the Suffolks, and the Clintons, and, in fact, of all those courtiers who wished to insult and injure Queen Katherine.

When he presented his treatise on the "Marriage Question" to the King, Henry asked him if he could maintain his views in Rome, if sent thither. Cranmer replied that he was ready to go there, and argue the question with any canonists put forward by the Pontiff. His chief argument was, that the King's marriage with his deceased brother's wife was not merely voidable, but *ab initio* void.

In the treatise above-mentioned Cranmer endeavoured to uphold his case by a reference to some obso-

⁸ "Archbishops of Canterbury," vol. vi., p. 435—441.

lete theories, which were directly opposed to his subsequent opinions as a follower of Zuingle, whose tenets are so well known for their dissidence from those of Catholicity. He had, however, a lively sense of the importance of promoting his sovereign's schemes for another marriage. There is good reason to believe that the book on the "Marriage Question" was the joint production of Stephen Gardiner, Edward Fox, and Cranmer. If the book possess any merit for theological learning, that portion does not belong to Cranmer, who was notably ignorant of theology. Pending the divorce between Henry and Katherine, he was "commanded by the King" to discuss the merits of the question with Sir Thomas More, on which occasion Cranmer exhibited a singular ignorance of any canon law on which to base his plea against Katherine. Even his pretences failed in subtlety; and, as the correspondence advanced, his arguments, fraught with specious assumptions, became weak and contradictory, and were finally dissipated by the powerful theological reasoning and open-hearted eloquence of the good and great Chancellor⁹.

Cranmer repaired to Oxford and Cambridge to "argue the question of his treatise¹," and was there sustained in all his sophistry by men like Stephen Gardiner (Secretary of State) and Edward Fox. As the patronage of the Crown was at their disposal, they made some converts to the Royal cause. An embassy to Rome was next arranged, and the Earl of Wiltshire

⁹ "Life of More;" also Pomeroy, Heylin, Strype, Burnet, and Collier.

¹ Cranmer's treatise on the divorce is said to be lost; but many bookworms think, with Dean Hook, that it is probably amongst or beneath ponderous piles of literary *adversaria* in the British Museum.

was placed at the head of the Commission. Amongst the High Commissioners were Gardiner, Cranmer, Lee, Edward Fox, Bonner, and other ecclesiastics, joined with the King's private agent, Sir Gregorie Cassali—a man who was notorious for “misstating facts,” and capable of performing any action which his master required. The proceedings were conducted in a manner suitable to the motive and the occasion. The conduct of the Commissioners must have failed to make a favourable impression upon the Pontiff as to the kindly feeling or courtesy of the King's representatives. Cranmer, however, was the exception, winning the confidence and esteem of Pope Clement by his respectful bearing, and the moderation which marked his every movement. Cranmer, after spending but few weeks at Rome, took leave of the Pontiff “in special kindness,” but remained on the Continent for more than a year—it is alleged—on the “King's business.” Of the proceedings in which he was engaged for his Royal master at this period, there is little known, unless in the ultimate results of his policy. He was, doubtless, proving to universities never unassailable that the *angels*² themselves were in favour of his master in that sad divorce.

As party and party-coloured religion have been overfond of Thomas Cranmer, it is fair to give upon him the calm verdict of Macaulay:—“The man who took the chief part in settling the conditions of the alliance which produced the Anglican Church was Archbishop Cranmer. He was the representative of both parties which at that time needed each other's assistance. He was at once a

² “Golden angels” were more in favour with Henry than the Rose nobles with his Plantagenet predecessors.

divine and a courtier. In his character of divine he was perfectly willing to go as far in the way of change as any Swiss or Scottish Reformer. In his character of courtier he was desirous to preserve that organization which had, during so many ages, admirably served the Bishops of Rome, and might be expected now to serve equally well the purpose of the English Kings and their ministers. His temper and his understanding eminently fitted him to act as mediator. Saintly in his professions, unscrupulous in his dealings, zealous for nothing, bold in speculations, a coward and a time-server in action, a placable enemy and a lukewarm friend, he was in every way qualified to arrange the terms of the coalition between the religious and worldly enemies of Popery."

The relations in which the Church of England, through the advice and intervention of Cranmer, stood with regard to the Crown are forcibly explained by Macaulay. This exposition shows that Cranmer was ready to exceed the boldest assumptions of his master, and to place in the most doubtful, passionate, and worldly hands, the eternal interests of the English millions. That the description of Lord Macaulay is a veritable one, we have more or less direct evidence from such Protestant authorities—men of an age proximate to Cranmer's own—as Fuller, Foxe, Strype, Jenkins, Heylin, Collier, Burnet, and many others. But the State Papers have now set the question at rest beyond doubt or cavil. So Lord Macaulay's portrait of Cranmer may go down for evermore as a true likeness of the "Great Reformer:"—"The founders of the English Church (says Macaulay) wrote and acted in an age of violent intellectual fermentation.

and of constant action and reaction. They often contradicted each other, and sometimes contradicted themselves. That the King was, under Christ, sole head of the Church, was a doctrine which they all with one voice affirmed; but those words had very different significations in different mouths, and in the same mouth at different conjunctures. Sometimes an authority which would have satisfied Hildebrand, was ascribed to the Sovereign, then it dwindled down to an authority little more than that which had been claimed by many ancient English Princes who had been in constant communion with the Church of Rome. What Henry and his favourite counsellors meant, at one time, by the supremacy, was certainly nothing less than the whole power of the Keys. The King was to be the Pope of his Kingdom, the Vicar of God, the expositor of Catholic verity, the channel of Sacramental graces. He arrogated to himself the right of deciding dogmatically what was orthodox doctrine, and what was heresy, of drawing up and imposing confessions of faith, and of giving religious instruction to his people. He proclaimed that all jurisdiction, spiritual as well as temporal, was derived from him alone, and that it was in his power to confer episcopal authority and to take it away. He actually ordered his seal to be put to commissions by which bishops were appointed, who were to exercise their functions as his deputies, and during his pleasure. According to this system, as expounded by Cranmer, the King was the spiritual as well as the temporal chief of the nation. In both capacities His Highness must have lieutenants. As he appointed civil officers to keep his seal, to collect his revenues, and to dispense justice in his name, so he

appointed divines of various ranks to preach the gospel and to administer the Sacraments. It was unnecessary that there should be any imposition of hands. The King—such was the opinion of Cranmer given in the plainest words—might, in virtue of authority derived from God, make a priest; and the priest so made needed no ordination whatever. These opinions the Archbishop, in spite of the opposition of less courtly divines, followed out to every legitimate consequence. He held that his own spiritual functions, like the secular functions of the Chancellor and Treasurer, were at once determined by a demise of the crown. When Henry died, therefore, the Primate and his suffragans took out fresh commissions, empowering them to ordain and to govern the Church till the new Sovereign should think fit to order otherwise. When it was objected that a power to bind and to loose, altogether distinct from temporal power, had been given by our Lord to His Apostles, some theologians of this school replied that the power to bind and to loose had descended, not to the clergy, but to the whole body of Christian men, and ought to be exercised by the chief magistrate as the representative of society. When it was objected that Saint Paul had spoken of certain persons whom the Holy Ghost had made overseers and shepherds of the faithful, it was answered that King Henry was the very overseer, the very shepherd whom the Holy Ghost had appointed, and to whom the expressions of Saint Paul applied ! ”

Elizabeth, although she scrupled not on occasion to stretch her prerogative as Head of the Church to the utmost, never believed herself entitled to adopt the comprehensive patent made out for her father's use by

Cranmer. That pride and avarice merely overruled conscience in this regard is proved in Henry's case by his final speech, his death, and his singular testament. That Elizabeth did not believe in the "divine right" to make and unmake genuine bishops and priests was proved by her own hesitating observances, which presented a mixture of the old and new religions, without manifesting any real worship at all; and solemnly so in her gloomy rejection on her death-bed of episcopal ministrations, which she coarsely discarded as the comforts of "hedge priests whom she herself had fashioned³." In the Appendix to Burnet's "History of the Reformation," (Part I. book iii., No. 21,) Cranmer is shown to have declared unreservedly, that "God had immediately committed to Christian Princes the whole cure of all their subjects, as well concerning the administration of God's word for the cure of souls, as concerning the administration of things political." In this evolution of the pliant Reformer's dogmata, Elizabeth not only never concurred, but more than once expressed surprise that he should have so "bemoyled" or forgotten even history as to ignore the fact that it was to no emperor, king, or prince, that the Author of Christianity delegated the power of ordaining the shepherds of His fold. Elizabeth gave still stronger proof of her rejection of such an assumption, for in the 37th Article of Belief, drawn out under her cognisance, it is declared in express terms, that "the ministering of God's word *does not belong to princes.*"

It has been recently contended that Cranmer's multitudinous tergiversations had their birth in the weakness

³ Lady Southwell's Statement; Miss Strickland's "Queens of England," vol. iv., p. 780.

of his character. A feeble excuse this to the most confiding of hero-worshippers. A close examination of his career will result in a conviction that the anomalies in Thomas Cranmer's conduct derived their origin from an utter and soulless want of principle. Let no flowers of sentiment be strewn upon a grave which otherwise would be arid and verdureless. The man essayed to fashion himself to the times ; but the occasion was not fit, although malleable, to his handling, and he perished in the effort to wield political passions in an era when the selfishness of others was more than a match for his own self-seeking. His disposition was naturally stern and unbending, but "pliable as a reed at the breeze of interest." When despatched to Rome on the mission about Henry's divorce, he completely won upon the Pope and his advisers. The custodian of the "Fisher-man's Ring" had not as yet met with a man so accustomed to angle in troubled waters, and the wearer of the triple tiara—the "centre and intellect of all the tangled diplomacy of Church, and State, and politics,"—became the dupe of a "common English clerk." The Pontiff regarded him, with truth, as a man of "much worldly wisdom," but he made a great mistake, when he believed him to be "of a frame of mind which could not be daunted by the power of princes." By his expressed horror of "loose ecclesiastics" and laboured demonstrations of piety, Cranmer led captive the ruler of the Vatican, who conferred upon him the high clerical dignity of "Penitentiary-general of England".

Brief time for rejoicing for this new dignity of

⁴ Dean Hook describes some of the duties conferred by this office, to be that of granting Papal dispensations ; for which he received considerable fees. The office was considered one of great importance,

Thomas Cranmer! Literally he ignored the Church "incontinently," in his passage home through Germany, where he visited the Elector of Hesse, and imitated the example of that wilful reformer by espousing the niece of Osiander.

After describing Cranmer's mission to the Emperor Charles in reference to the divorce of Queen Katherine and "the coldness of the German Princes to the cause," Dean Hook proceeds to state that "he (Cranmer) lingered in Germany, and had no desire to hasten his return to England. He was not engaged in theological discussions, and the German divines were, politically as well as on spiritual grounds, opposed to the 'Grand Penitentiary of England.' They (the Germans) were the supporters of Luther, and Cranmer represented the royal opponent of Luther. The Germans regarded as heretics all who refused to subscribe to the dogma of 'consubstantiation;' and for holding—or, at all events, for propagating—that dogma, Cranmer was prepared, as was soon after proved, to consign the criminal to the tender mercies of the State, which would silence him by the stake. In their Erastianism they might have found a common sentiment, and in a determination to circulate the Scriptures; but, even in their antagonism to the Pope, Cranmer was not prepared, at this time, to go as far as the Lutherans⁵."

The Dean then proceeds to describe Osiander. "With one man only could Cranmer sympathize. Osiander, like himself, was an enthusiastic student of Scripture,

and only conferred on men "most devoted to the Latin Church." (Fuller, Collier, Heylin, and Ranke.)

⁵ Dean Hook's "Archbishops of Canterbury," vol. vi., p. 448.

and was eminent as a critic of the Greek Testament ⁶. Both of them were discontented with the existing state of things : they saw the necessity of reform, but could neither of them, at that time, decide what the reform ought to be. Neither of them was a Papist, and both were not Protestants. Osiander feared and disliked Luther, and he tyrannized over Melanchthon. His mind was in sympathy with no one. He was a self-opinionated man, who entertained such singular notions on theological subjects that, as Mosheim remarks, it is easier to say what he did not, than what he *did* believe.”

Dr. Hook then proceeds to Cranmer's marriage, and writes :—“ But it was not by the learning that Cranmer was detained in Germany : the bright eyes and sweet temper of Osiander's niece had made an impression upon the susceptible heart of Thomas Cranmer, who, having recovered from the loss of *his Joan*, was *passionately in love* with the fair Marguerite ⁷. They married ; and this marriage may be adduced to corroborate Cranmer's own statement that he never sought, desired, nor expected the Primacy of the English Church.” Dr. Hook seems to consider that the King's command to Cran-

⁶ The name of Osiander was assumed by Andrew Hozeman, in accordance with a custom which greatly prevailed at the period amongst literary men in Germany. Many books too, in defence of the Catholic religion and of the religious houses, were published in England, under fictitious names, from fear of the deadly consequences to the writers if their identity were discovered.

⁷ The bride was seventeen years of age—her clerical bridegroom, forty-nine. Erasmus, with his usual cynicism, avers that elderly priests, tired of their vows, always manifested a weakness for “ young and buxom damsels,” when they got wearied of solitary virtue. Cranmer, when acting most adversely to all received notions of good, affected a mortified air. It is not so strange that Marguerite should be deceived by appearances ; but then a Primate *in petto* was not to be despised, especially by a needy German lady.

mer to accept the Primacy should be regarded as imperative; but did not Cranmer know in his own heart that by the fact of his having sacrilegiously broken his vows of celibacy in the first instance with Joan; and, secondly, having superadded perjury when, as priest and "Grand Penitentiary," wedding his German "handmaid," he had utterly disqualified himself for even the lowest offices of the Church, not to speak of the Primacy? Yet, when he came to England he was informed that he *had been* appointed Archbishop of Canterbury. Did he exclaim—with the ingenuous Portuguese divine—"Nolo episcopari?" By no means: all had been arranged: the noble Wareham had just died, worn out with good labours; and the Primatial See was to be the reward of the man who was ready to give religious semblance to an act of iniquity which his virtuous predecessor ever denounced—the divorce of Katherine. Concluding this "interesting" phase of Cranmer's career, Dean Hook remarks:—"Whatever might be the insults to which they might be subjected, Cranmer and *his* Marguerite *determined not to part*. He sent her before him to England, there to provide a home for herself, preparatory to *future arrangements which would depend upon circumstances*®."

What is this? Let the reader take the first of the two foregoing sentences. If Cranmer did not know that he was offending against the established belief, law, and sentiment, in breaking his vows and clandestinely allying himself to his German *fräulein*, why fear insults in England? In the second sentence Dean Hook admits an evil forethought on the part of the

® "Archbishops of Canterbury," vol. vi., p. 450.

Archbishop which argues little for his manliness. If Cranmer did not believe that he would not prove useful to Henry (although it is most probable the latter was totally unaware of the marital condition of his spiritual adviser), as Luther had been malleable to the polygamous Philip of Hesse, he dared not thus have treated Marguerite as his leman—to “depend upon circumstances.” When subsequent “circumstances” rendered Cranmer not altogether so necessary to Henry, the Six Acts interfered with Marguerite’s residence in Lambeth Palace, and she was compelled to depart for Germany.

On Cranmer’s return to England, he was invested in “all the prouderie of state,” with his new Quirinal paraphernalia, and unhesitatingly took the oaths and vows which the canon laws demanded, and which he accepted, to be as freely violated as they were readily received⁹.

In the Lambeth MSS. (1136), published by Todd, vol. i., p. 65, the reader will find minute particulars of the conduct of Cranmer on this occasion. Before becoming Archbishop, Todd states that Cranmer privately protested, before four witnesses and a notary, that by the oath of obedience to the Pope, which, for *form’s sake*, he should be obliged to take, he did not intend to do anything prejudicial to the rights of the King or prohibitory of such reforms as “he might judge useful to the Church of England.” In this protest he paltered with conscience and honesty. It was his object to clothe it with all the canonical forms, but at the same time to conceal its purport from the public. After reading this protest to his five obsequious witnesses, Cran-

⁹ Herbert, in Kennet, p. 219; Strype’s Memorials; Hume, vol. iii., p. 232 (folio edit.) ; Lingard, vol. iv.

mer proceeded to the steps of the high altar at St. Stephen's, Westminster, and, having declared to those "same five persons" that he adhered to the protest he had already made, *he took the pontifical oath!* The "consecration" followed; after which, having again reminded the same five individuals of his previous protest, *he took the oath a second time*, and was then solemnly inducted into his honours by the Papal delegates! Dean Hook, after a long and feeble defence of Cranmer in this matter, states that Cranmer took the oaths as a mere form, and that they had "long since become obsolete!" If so, the laws of God, of virtue, and of honour had likewise become obsolete.

Many German Reformers were hostile to the proposed divorce from Katherine, and some of their distinguished men declared it a "heinous sin against justice and morality." But it is contended that the German Reformers were influenced by the Emperor Charles. No doubt they were to some extent; but it is still more certain that the Emperor or the King of England could have purchased the support or advocacy of either the German princes or the Reformers. They all seemed saleable, temporally or spiritually.

Cranmer, of course, persevered, and tried how far English gold might prove successful. Mr. Rawdon Browne's "Venetian State Papers," and Cranmer's own letters, now prove that Cranmer was the main agent in bribing foreign Universities to give favourable opinions on the divorce question. The more these State Papers are examined, in the worse aspect Cranmer appears.

Dean Hook approaches the question of the "bribery to procure opinions" on the divorce of Katherine with evident reluctance; yet he admits sufficient to

manifest his belief in Cranmer's want of integrity. "How far," he writes, "Cranmer was mixed up in those measures by which men were bribed, coerced, or cajoled, it is impossible to say. We know, however, that he had now entered into the cause with all the fervour of a partisan; and we fear that he considered no means to be unlawful which was conducive to the end which he had at heart¹."

As stated in a former chapter, after a protracted negotiation between the Courts of Rome and England, Cranmer pronounced a parliamentary divorce between the King and the wife of his youth. Another statute declared it treason to write or speak against the divorce from Katherine, and also against the King's marriage with Anna Boleyn.

Dean Hook's opinion of the learning and morality of Cranmer, in his character of judge at this epoch, is strikingly true. "No words," he says, "can be adduced more condemnatory of the conduct of Cranmer on this occasion. It is admitted that he was simulating the character of a just judge, when he had deliberately come to deliver an iniquitous judgment; but he seems never to have been conscience-stricken for his conduct on this matter. . . . Cranmer did not with his own eyes behold the weeping, praying, dying, injured woman, who was born a princess of the mightiest empire in the world; had for a quarter of a century lived an honest wife, a courageous Queen, and a pious Christian; and was now to regard herself as a cast-off concubine, and her daughter—her only surviving child—as a bastard. Cranmer saw her not: he had scarcely ever seen her, and his was

¹ "Archbishops of Canterbury," vol. vi., p. 446.

not a vivid imagination to depict the sorrows of her heart." The same author further describes party feeling on this subject as that of a half infidel and Puritan faction, "who defamed the saint and canonized the harlot."

Even Mr. Froude disapproves of the bearing of his hero at the time of the divorce: "It might be supposed that to a person like Cranmer, the court at Dunstable, the coronation of the new Queen, and the past out of which these things had risen, and the future which they threatened to involve, would have seemed at least serious; and that, engaged as he had been as a chief actor in a matter which, if it had done nothing else, had broken the heart of a high-born lady, whom once he had honoured as his Queen, he would have been either silent about his exploits, or if he had spoken of them, would not have spoken without some show of emotion. We look for a symptom of feeling, but we do not find it. When the coronation festivities were over, the Archbishop wrote to his friends an account of what had been done by himself and by others, in a light gossiping tone of common-place relation. We have been disappointed²."

The reader has already seen what took place at Dunstable; but it is sometimes necessary to recur to the proceedings at that place, in order to collect the links in the chain of evidence involving the chief actor. Gervase Markham, Prior of Dunstable, welcomed Cranmer and the other prelates who came thither on their malign mission. Markham, as the friend of Cranmer, was the obsequious servant of Cranmer's master; but the monks

² Froude's "England," vol. i., p. 458.

of Dunstable were not the credulous and unobservant inferiors of Prior Markham. "The monks had a bad opinion of Markham; he was a worldly-minded man, and some of them questioned his morality³." The part Cranmer desired Markham to perform was, to give a religious solemnity to the divorce trial; and he and the other prelates held the court in the chapel of Our Lady attached to the Abbey church. The proceedings opened (all the olden solemnities of the Catholic Church being used) with a procession to the chief altar, where high mass was celebrated—Cranmer being the chief celebrant, some other bishops assisting in the ceremonies.

Two hours subsequently the court opened for the adjudication of the Queen's case, when religion was again invoked "anterior to proceeding," for the attempt to consecrate injustice was still a compliance unavoidable by those men who, in the name of religion, effected direful wrongs. Gardiner and Bonner acted on the occasion as assessors to Cranmer, and, of course, concurred in his previously formalized decision.

The opinion of Dean Hook as to Archbishop Cranmer will be of far more importance in "years to come" than it may be considered now. He writes:—"That there was collusion between the King and the Archbishop is proved by two letters written by Cranmer for the 'licence to act.' Both letters are at present in existence, both in Cranmer's handwriting. Both bear the marks of having been folded, sealed, and reviewed by the King: that is to say, the King was *to be consulted as to the letter which was to be addressed to himself*.

³ Dugdale, i., 239; State Papers, i., p. 394.

With the first, apparently, he (Cranmer) was not well satisfied. Cranmer, in the extreme servility with which he wrote, overstrained his point in the first of the two letters. It is difficult to see any real difference between them: though, I think, Dr. Lingard is right, when he says: ‘the King’s object was to compel Cranmer to take the whole responsibility upon himself⁴.’” To even the kindest-hearted reader of history this phase of Archbishop Cranmer’s life must appear incompatible with his hitherto accepted virtues amongst the Apostles of the Reformation. Yet he was not then—and perhaps never intended to be—the establisher of a new religion. But, at this time at all events, he acted merely as the episcopal prime minister of a despot.

It is stated by Dean Hook, that Archbishop Cranmer had no influence with Lord Cromwell to check the cruelty and dishonesty of his policy⁵. We find, however, by a reference to Lingard (vol. v., p. 62), that at the period the Countess of Salisbury and other notables were condemned to death, Cranmer and Cromwell reigned without control in the King’s councils. Strype, at p. 79, states that Cranmer “required direction from Thomas Cromwell in every thing.” This admission on the part of a partisan biographer places the relation between the Archbishop and Lord Cromwell in a clear light. These allegations and many others are fully corroborated by the State Papers. It is no grateful task to pursue this shameful historical investigation; but the truth must no longer be concealed.

A few years had only elapsed when Cranmer again

⁴ “Archbishops of Canterbury;” note on vol. vi., p. 468.

⁵ Dean Hook, with fullest knowledge, differs from Mr. Froude in the latter’s worship of Cromwell.

gave judgment, declaring that the marriage between King Henry and Anna Boleyn "was, and always had been, null and void." Cranmer gave this judgment standing, with hands uplifted to Heaven, and assuming a manner of "awful solemnity;" "invoking the name of God the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost, and calling witness the whole Court of Heaven⁶." It has been alleged by Turner and other writers that Lord Cromwell, as the King's "Vicar-General," pronounced the sentence; but as Pomeroy was a contemporary, and probably was present, we prefer the evidence of his small black-letter book, and accept his identification of Cranmer.

To regard the "conscientious scruples," and the "strict adherence to law," assumed in these proceedings other than as transparent falsehood and hypocrisy would shame the shallowest intellect: nevertheless, English historians of every repute have defended those transactions on what they designate moral and political considerations. Why, morality had been hopelessly wrecked by the injustice done to Katherine, and even Cranmer ought to have been ashamed to blaspheme virtue by an assumption of its cloak.

Rapin (vol. i., p. 812) defends Cranmer's conduct in the divorce of Anna Boleyn, by stating that he was "forced to pronounce the divorce between Henry and Anna Boleyn and the illegitimacy of Elizabeth." On the 17th of May the Archbishop declared in his "spiritual judgment" that Anna was *never* married to the King, although she was condemned to death for adultery committed by her as Queen Consort of England, and exe-

⁶ Pomeroy's Chronicle, p. 12.

cuted two days later. Ales and Burnet have expressed the opinion that, whilst Cranmer pronounced the decree against Anna Boleyn, "*he believed his own statement against her to have been false, and that she was innocent.*" The statement of Alexander Ales is most important on this point, because he was both the contemporary and intimate friend of Cranmer. "The Archbishop of Canterbury" (observes Lingard) "had formerly dissolved the marriage between Henry and Katherine; he was now required to dissolve that between Henry and Anne. It must have been a most unwelcome and painful task. He had examined that marriage juridically; had pronounced it good and valid, and had confirmed it by his authority as metropolitan and judge; but to hesitate would have cost him his head. He acceded to the proposal with all the zeal of a proselyte, and, adopting as his own objections to its validity with which he had been furnished, sent copies of them to both the King and Queen 'for the salvation of their souls,' and the due effect of law; with a summons to each to appear in his court, and to show cause why a sentence of divorce should not be pronounced. Never, perhaps, was there a more solemn mockery of the forms of justice than in the pretended trial of this extraordinary cause⁷."

Burnet (i. p. 200) publishes a very artful letter of Cranmer to the King on this divorce question, which, when closely sifted, proves that Cranmer could descend to any baseness to sustain his position.

The Prelate (Cranmer) who pronounced those contradictory opinions upon questions involving such grave

⁷ Lingard, vol. v., pp. 72, 73.

religious and social interest as separation of those "whom God had joined," has been described as the "friend and confessor" of Anna Boleyn. Burnet, in an apparently earnest tone, states that the Archbishop was "much afflicted at pronouncing against the Queen." This statement is a mere effort to hoodwink posterity. Cranmer never permitted sentiment to supersede interest. He was so far Anna's friend as he was permitted to partake of the sunshine; but when her fortunes were in shadow, he kept aloof from the darkened circle, and at any cost stood within the light. Under the best condition of her fortune Cranmer was merely Anna's political friend, and the extent of his amity was graduated by circumstances. The amount of his faith to Anna Boleyn was equivalent to that manifested at a subsequent period by Sir William Cecil to his own patron, Somerset. In truth, the friendship of Archbishop Cranmer for the mother of our "great Protestant Queen" was a sentiment convertible with his own interest—the plausible profession of a courtier, who refused even the mercy of silent ingratitude to the great misfortune which, when the day of sorrow came, struck down his friend and patroness. Sir James Mackintosh, a great admirer of Cranmer—in consequence, most probably of the results of his conduct—describes him at the time of his giving judgment in the case of Anna Boleyn, as "the most unhappy or the most abject of men." Dean Hook, at the conclusion of a review of the King's and Cranmer's conduct towards Anna Boleyn, in the case of "her divorce," concludes in these words:—"The whole is a sad story, from whatever point of view, we regard it; and of Cranmer's conduct in the affair, the less that his admirers say the greater will be their

discretion^s.” This is a pregnant admission. Hume contends “that Cranmer alone of all Anna’s adherents still retained his friendship for her.” Who knows? Some Puritan writers, indeed, allege that Archbishop Cranmer visited Anna Boleyn the very day before her execution, and “gave her much spiritual comfort.” But the Archbishop was the last man the unhappy Queen wished to see; for she was then aware of his treachery and deceit. It would be scarcely possible even for Cranmer to assume the wicked boldness of going through the mockery of “friendship and religious comfort.” On the contrary, he was busily engaged on the day in question “preparing for the wedding of Anna’s successor,” Jane Seymour; nay, on the very day Anna was beheaded, the Primate signed the dispensation and other ecclesiastical forms condescendingly deemed necessary for the marriage of Henry and Jane Seymour. These documents are still extant with that death-black date. What defence can the Puritan advocates of the author of the “Book of Common Prayer” make for his conduct during the few days preceding the murder of Anna Boleyn? They claim Anna as a patroness of the Reformation: was it a virtue in Cranmer to compass that patroness’s death?

Although Cranmer’s name is not connected with any document as yet discovered bearing on the proceedings taken from the 1st of March to the 25th of April, and down to the arrest of Anna Boleyn on the 1st of May, there can be no doubt that Henry consulted him throughout the whole of the conspiracy against Queen Anna. Cranmer alone knew of all his royal master’s love intrigues—far more, indeed, than Suffolk and Lord

^s “Archbishops of Canterbury,” vol. vi., p. 509.

Clinton⁹. The members of the Council knew nothing of the King's plans until fully matured, or a "conscientious view of the matter to be disposed of" was laid before them. Cranmer was his adviser and guide; or, to use the words of Queen Katherine, "Henry was Cranmer's shadow." Cranmer was no stranger to the growing passion of his Sovereign for Jane Seymour, and the presents lavished on her for some months previous to the 1st of May, so fatal to Anna Boleyn. Cranmer's biographers are silent as to his proceedings during that period; but a combination of circumstances, closely linked with the accommodating character of the man—who never seemed to act without a motive—and the fact that Henry was in almost daily intercourse with him, lead to a fair conclusion as to the part he assumed in the plot against Anna previous to her arrest. Let the reader reflect on the words of the King—"With Thomas Cranmer at my elbow, I could overcome every difficulty," And again, we have (to judge by context) the hesitating admission of Dean Hook, that, "in his worst actions, Henry the Eighth found an instrument in Cranmer¹." Cranmer had satisfied the King's "conscience" in the case of Katherine. He could accomplish a more facile task in the case of Anna Boleyn. He had won Henry's patronage by offering suggestions and pandering to his evil passions, in one case: why not more readily in the other?

Let us pursue the investigation a little further. John Foxe states that the Archbishop was the "confidential

⁹ Henry's indescribable correspondence with Cranmer concerning Anno of Cleves, proves on what shameful subjects a licentious layman could dare to treat in letters to an Archbishop.

¹ "Archbishops of Canterbury," vol. vii., p. 418.

adviser of Henry," whilst Dean Hook contends that he was not a constant councillor of the King's (p. 125). The Dean, however, admits in the following page (126) that "the personal feeling of attachment to Cranmer on the part of Henry was no secret to the courtiers." And again:—"The Archbishop's secretary records that he heard Lord Cromwell say one day at dinner to my Lord of Canterbury—'You were born in a happy hour, I suppose, for do or say what you will, the King will always take it at your hand. And I must needs confess that in some things I have complained of you; but all in vain; for the King will never give credit against you, whatsoever is laid to your charge; but let me or any other of the Council be complained of, his Highness will most severely chide and fall out with us².'" Dean Hook feeling the force of Cromwell's observations (quoted by himself), and the fact that the Archbishop's confidential secretary relates them, attempts to "explain matters." "Cranmer," he says, "was happy to be the King's friend; Cromwell, a keen observer of men, saw that this was Cranmer's ambition and pride, and he knew how to apply the harmless flattery." A man in this situation could hardly fail to be frequently called upon by his master to sustain him out of doors, and to give the weight of his position to the performance of that master's will. In what a contemptible light does Dean Hook, at page 134, place the King and his "adviser!" "Henry liked to have his opinions canvassed; it was a new source of enjoyment to him, when he found a man who would openly tell him his mind, and when he knew all the while

² Ralph Maurice, p. 259; "Archbishops of Canterbury," Vol. vii.

that this same man would, when the King's will was distinctly declared, eat his own words, and obey."

Lord Cromwell, though the confidential friend of Cranmer, had an interest apart from his in the destruction of Anna Boleyn, because he had reason to believe that she had laid before her husband an account of peculations committed by him on the public revenue, and disclosed the "requisitions" he had made on public bodies for his personal enrichment. Cranmer and Cromwell had for some time observed Anna Boleyn closely, and their spies were keenly on the watch. Cromwell's policy was ever to take the boldest and the quickest mode of destroying an enemy. For this "instant mode of action" he has been even praised by a recent writer. It has been said that between Cromwell and Cranmer there existed a "political and religious" compact; although they were very dissimilar in character, mind, and tastes. Both possessed an apparent courage, yet both exhibited craven hearts when confronted with superior power; they feared and hated each other the more because circumstances compelled them to seem friends; but the plunder of the Church and the celibacy of the clergy were questions which brought them in accord, and formed the basis of their combined action.

On p. 88, vol. vii, of the "*Archbishops of Canterbury*," a passage occurs, which bears out the opinion as to the "compact:"—"It would appear from letter (ecl., vii.) that Cromwell was, for some reason or other, in Cranmer's pay." This statement must have reference merely to the black mail which Cromwell, in the spirit of a potent moss-trooper, levied from high and low. He deemed them the vails of his office.

A living and distinguished clergyman of the Anglican Church has felt bound, in the cause of truth, to lay before the world, the true character of the men who compassed the Reformation. We leave the reader, without comment, to ponder upon the terrific fidelity of the following picture of Cranmer :—

“I have ever held (says Dr. Littledale) that courage in a man ranks with purity in a woman, and tested by any such comparison, Cranmer must take his stand with Lais and Messalina,—nay, with the nameless depravities which we associate with Faustina and Sappho. Every crime which tempted him he committed; every crime which any one in power wished to commit he assisted or condoned. If Nathan, instead of denouncing David in the parable of the ewe-lamb, had pronounced a sentence of divorce between Uriah and Bathsheba, and had countersigned the fatal missive to Joab; if Elijah, instead of meeting Ahab with the message of Divine vengeance at the entrance of Jezreel, had presided over the mock court which condemned Naboth, and had been rewarded for his subserviency by a rent-charge on the vineyard; if Daniel had at once sacrificed his religion at the ukase of Darius; if John the Baptist had consented to perform the rite of marriage between Herod Antipas and Herodias, Philip’s wife, how would we loathe their memories? And yet each of them, had he stopped short there, would have been incomparably less guilty than Thomas Cranmer, whose whole life was a tissue of like acts³.”

³ Dr. Littledale’s “Lecture on the Characters of the First English Reformers.”

THE KING'S SUPREMACY IN IRELAND.

WHILST a large number of the Convocation, bishops, clergy, and laity of England professed to accept the King's Supremacy in spiritual matters, a very different feeling existed amongst the English settlers in Ireland. The native Irish and their chiefs outside the Pale of course ignored Henry's rule in every thing, whilst those within it could never be brought to change their creed. Archbishop Brown's letter from Dublin in 1538, exhibits the manner in which Cromwell and Cranmer endeavoured to introduce the new religion into Ireland:—

“Since my coming over here I have been unable, even in the diocese of Dublin, to induce any, either religious or secular, to preach the word of God, or the King's just title as Supreme Head over the Church. . . They that then could and would very often, even until the right Christians were weary of them, preach after the old sort and fashion, will now not once open their lips in any pulpit for the manifestation of the same, but in corners and such company as them liketh, they can full earnestly utter their opinions. . . . The Observants are worse than all the others, for I can make them neither swear nor preach amongst us. This comes from the extreme handling that my Lord Deputy hath used towards me, what by often imprisonment, and also expelling me from mine own house, keeping there no hospitality at all; and so contemptuously vilify me, that I take God to record I had, but that hope comforteth me, rather forsake all those to abide so many ignominious reproaches. . . . For the love ye

bear to the sincere doctrine of God's Word, and the setting forward of our Prince's title, send to Master Treasurer, the Chief Justice, the Master of the Rolls, or any two of them, such a straight (strict) commandment over me and all other ecclesiastical persons, as I perceive the King's Highness hath sent of late through England to the sheriffs of every shire. . . . There is never an archbishop or bishop but myself, made by the King, but he is repelled, even now by provision. Again, for all that ever I could do, might I not make them once, but as I send my own servants to do it, to cancel out of the Canon of the Mass, or other books, the name of the Bishop of Rome. . . . As for lack of dispensations they (we) are compelled to sue to Rome. I think it necessary that we should have dispensations, a vicar-general, and a master of the faculties. A pardon hath lately come from Rome much of consonant (similar) to a pardon granted by Julian the Second in the time of the wars between the French king and himself; and that was, that they who should enjoy it were to fast on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after they heard of the same; and were to receive communion on the Sunday following. . . . If such things go unpunished, whilst the King's High Commissioners are here (in Dublin), in seeing these men so ready and prompt to admit the Bishop of Rome's letters, and so sturdy and fling against our Prince's power, what will men think?

“(Signed) GEORGE BROWN.

“Dublin, January 8, 1538.

“To the Lord Privy Seal (Cromwell⁴).”

⁴ Carew, State Papers (Brewer and Boleyn, 1515—1574), p. 135-6.

In other letters to Lord Cromwell, Dr. Brown complains of the "favours granted" to the Observants by the Lord Deputy; and the "distaste of the English settlers to any change from the principles of the Bishop of Rome."

Lord Leonard Gray and the judges were at that time hostile to Archbishop Brown; they had heard of the King's claims to be Head of the Church with dismay; but a prelate with a wife or a concubine they would not tolerate. We may add that three years later (1541) Lord Leonard Gray "closely followed" the Geraldines, his confiding victims, to the scaffold. Stowe states that he died "like a pious and honest Christian." He was impeached for treason, but there is no record of it extant. It is most probable that this hot-headed nobleman became obnoxious to Archbishop Brown's party in London, whose efforts to forward the Reformation in Ireland were baffled by Lord Gray and the Irish judges. Hume states that Gray rendered much service to the English Crown in Ireland, and seems at a loss to know how he came to be beheaded. In rendering "service to England," as an Irish Lord Deputy, he could scarcely fail to act with injustice. "Lord Gray never made recompence of any wrong that he did to an Irishman." Such is the statement chronicled in the Irish State Papers of Henry's reign. Archbishop Brown, Cranmer's creature, was one of the chief witnesses against Lord Gray. Gray's ignorance of Ireland and the mode of "managing parties" there, led him into many fatal mistakes; he was charged with having been "bribed by the Irish chiefs; that he had assisted the O'Neils to oppress the Maguires, who were friendly to the English rule;

that he was mean and treacherous, and that he did nothing to conciliate the native Irish." The charges against him were ninety in number, but were reduced to five. His opposition to the "new learning" was, in all probability, the charge for which he really suffered. Cranmer's name does not appear in those proceedings, but there are documents extant which prove that he sustained the policy of Dr. Brown in Ireland. Lord Leonard Gray, however, was neither prudent nor discreet, as those qualities were then understood, and fell a victim to a combination formed against him by men who, whilst hating one another, acted with fatal concord when their interests pointed to a sacrifice.

EXECUTION OF THE ABBOT OF GLASTONBURY.

THE last Abbot of Glastonbury was Richard Whiting. His sad story derives more interest from being chronicled by an Anglican divine. "He was an old man, about eighty years of age, and had been long known for his practical piety, and his great-souled hospitality. Every Wednesday and Friday the poor of the neighbourhood came in crowds to his gate, and as many as five hundred of the country gentry sat down at his table; while he had the sons of the latter living in the monastery, to the number of three hundred, for the purpose of an education such as is now received at Eton or Westminster, besides many other youths of a lower rank whom he gratuitously supported with the same object as a preparation for Oxford or Cambridge. . . . Lord Cromwell's commissioners, however, came suddenly one morning at the end of September, 1539, to Glastonbury, at ten o'clock. The abbot was not at

home; and they proceeded to Sharphorn, another residence of the community, and found the venerable father in his library. They questioned him on many matters of which he appeared to have known nothing. They brought him back to the abbey, and when he went to bed that night, they searched his study for letters and books, and found secreted (they said) a MS. book of his own arguments against the divorce of the King and Katherine, which the commissioners took 'to be a great matter' (Katherine had been dead more than three years at this time); also divers pardons, copies of bulls, and the counter part life of Thomas à Beckett in print; but (the inquisitors continue) we could not find any letter that was material⁵. They, however, considered themselves amply provided with materials for a charge of high treason, and write to Cromwell of the abbot's crooked and treacherous conduct and bad heart. Whiting is sent to London; and a communication to Lord Cromwell detailing the wealth of Glastonbury and also several curious relations as to how far the abbey had served the people, and the popularity its inmates had won. Layton and Pollard again communicated with Cromwell, that they had discovered fresh treasons committed by the abbot. . . . Those treasons ascribed to the abbot and his brethren consisted in the endeavour to secrete the treasures 'dedicated to God' from the hands of the King and his courtiers. The same 'treason' was said to have been committed in

⁵ In Stephens's "*History of Monasteries*," p. 425, it is stated that the "King's searchers brought in this little book against the divorce, and concealed it in the library without the Abbot's knowledge." Mr. Blunt adds to this the brief but pregnant comment—"Nothing more likely."

many other communities. Indeed, at Durham there is a tradition (also known on the Continent) that the jewels and plate of the cathedral still remain in some undiscovered place of concealment⁶." The Abbot of Glastonbury and his brethren were doomed. The "grand old abbot," as Dr. Blunt styles him, broken in mind and wasted by sickness and imprisonment, was taken to Wells to go through the form of a trial by jury, the result having been duly arranged, by a "sorting of the evidence"—Cromwell's own phrase. The aged victim did not seem to comprehend the proceedings, "being deaf and ill, and having no counsel." The usual judicial mockery having been gone through, he was condemned to die on the following day. He begged permission to take leave of his monks, his domestics and retainers, and the sixty little orphans whom he had "gathered from far and near," and all of whom loved him; but his supplications merely elicited the laughter of Lord Russell and other officials. A panic spread through the country, and the people expressed a determination to avenge the cause of the abbot; but Russell, ever prompt and energetic, hanged several persons and imprisoned others, and having thus diffused a "wholesome terror," he declared that "law, order, and loyalty, were in a healthy state." "At one of the clock" the Abbot of Glastonbury was placed on a hurdle, like a murderer, and drawn through the village to the top of Tor-hill which overlooked the abbey of Glastonbury. Here he was again met with ribaldry and insult by one of the inquisitors, who demanded a "truthful confession and acknowledgment of his crimes." "I have no crimes to confess," said the

⁶ So late as 1866, a fruitless search was made for the plate.

abbot; "I have faithfully served the King; but my duty to God and the commands of His Church I shall obey and defend, even though it may cost me my life. I am now ready to die." The end of the story may be given from Lord Russell's letter to Cromwell:—"On the 14th of this month the abbot of Glastonbury was arraigned, and the next day put to execution with two of his monks *for the robbery of Glastonbury church*. On the Tor-hill next unto the town of Glaston, the said abbot was executed, his body divided in four parts, whereof one quarter standeth at Wells, another at Bath, and Ilchester and Bridgewater the rest, and his head was placed right on the abbey gate at Glaston⁷." Russell misinformed Cromwell: it was the Abbots of Reading and Colchester who suffered with Dr. Whiting.

Thus was an aged and virtuous ecclesiastic murdered for a charge of stealing his own property—his real crime consisting in endeavouring to conceal the means whereby he dispensed the unbounded charity of the brotherhood. We look in vain for any sign of Archbishop Cranmer's intervention or even remonstrance against this barbarous murder and robbery.

At the time of the judicial murders of the Abbot of Glastonbury and his brethren the King was preparing for his marriage with Anne of Cleves. The Abbot of Tendring and two priors were sent to the scaffold about the same period. They all died like Christian martyrs.

Saint Dunstan was the first Abbot of Glastonbury. To all the generations of men by whom Britain has

⁷ Supp. Monas.; Camden Society Papers; State Papers; Blunt's "Reformation."

been inhabited, Glastonbury has offered attractions, though the interest through which the attraction has arisen, has varied greatly in different periods of our history. It was at one time an islet, standing in the centre of an estuary, covered with fruit trees and shrubs, and, from the clearness of the waters with which it was surrounded, deserving the name which was given to it by the Britons, "Ynyswytryn," or "the glassy island." The Romans knew it as "Insula Avalonia." The Saxons called it "Glæstingalyrig," a word of the same import as that which was adopted by the olden inhabitants. Somewhere in the fated Isle of Avalon the wandering Briton believed that his chivalrous King Arthur slept in a fairy bower, to awake, in due time, as the avenger of his country's wrongs; the Irish came to this memorable place under the influence of O'Donalan's ballad that the remains of Saint Patrick were "translated hither by the fairies." Saxon and Norman approached Glastonbury with reverence and love. Many English kings and queens visited it in penitential garb; and at other times in royal state. The library and works of art deposited at Glastonbury would have been of much interest and value to posterity. Of the "Every-day book of entry" there were 540 volumes at the period of the Dissolution. This book was a record—and, like all such monastic books—a minute one, of the proceedings of the abbey for several centuries. Amongst the brotherhood were learned scholars from every part of Europe; but the most remarkable were from the west of Ireland. Many of the illuminated MS. books were written and arranged by Saint Dunstan, who is also said to have executed some paintings and sculpture. Dunstan's labours were incessant; and his talents most versatile;

he manufactured ornaments in silver and gold for the abbey church; and he worked at the anvil like an artisan of the smithy; he made bells for the church of Abingdon, which were in the belfry in the 14th century. He was an experienced agriculturist as well as a botanist. Down to the period of the Monastic Inquisition were to be seen at Glastonbury the crosses, censers, and vestments, which were the work of his own hands⁸. The visits of antiquarians to Glastonbury continue to the present, and the place is yet regarded with a conscious though inexplicable reverence by the present inhabitants of the neighbourhood, such is the power of tradition, even when faith and shrine have changed or disappeared. The Poet Laureate has made the following reference to the site of the ancient and holy fane:—

“This loved valley of Avélon,
Where falls not hail, nor rain, nor any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns,
And lovely hollows crown'd with summer sea.”

In subsequent pages further reference must be made to this noble abbey.

DR. STEPHEN GARDINER.

[First Part.]

THE author of the “English Chancellors” describes Dr. Stephen Gardiner as a “man of original genius, of powerful intellect, and of an independent mind⁹.”

⁸ Turner’s “Anglo Saxon History,” vol. i., p. 379.

⁹ “Lord Chancellors of England,” vol. ii., p. 40. We may here state that no life of Dr. Gardiner has been specially written, and his biography, if such it can be called, occurs incidentally in the history of his time, from which a fair mode of judging of his merits cannot be derived.

Many statements have been made as to his birth : that he was the "natural son of Lionell Woodville, Bishop of Salisbury," and also the son of "poor but honest parents." These calumnies were part and parcel of the policy of the political concoctors of the new creed ; the Protestant writers making use of injurious statements *pari passu* with the invention of printing. The printing of the "Word of God" and the dissemination of falsehood seem sadly coexistent with English Protestantism.

In Thorndale's "Memorials of Abbots and Bishops," he says that "the Bishop of Salisbury had a young gentleman in his household named Gardyner, whom he regarded much for his fine parts ; but the Bishop was angry at his foolish marriage with one Rachel Whitechurch ; that the fruit of this marriage was a son, who was named Stephen ; that the father and mother died in a short time after of some foreign disease (perhaps the plague) ; the Bishop supplied means to educate young Stephen for the Church." The author of this black-letter book, it is probable, derived his information from the "disbanded monks," whose traditionary experience was very valuable. It is supposed, however, that Stephen Gardiner was born in 1483, at the commencement of the reign of Richard III. Of his school-days nothing is known, until he appeared as a student at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. There he made great proficiency in classical learning, devoting himself to the school of the "Ciceronians," then in high repute. At the same time he laid the foundation of his future advancement by the special skill he acquired in the civil and canon law. In 1520 he was admitted a Doctor in both faculties, and soon after he was made Master of

Trinity Hall. The link in his history is frequently broken from the fact of the destruction of so many MSS. bearing on the college and public life of ecclesiastics and other eminent men of the times. The Duke of Norfolk, to whose son he was Latin tutor, is supposed to have introduced him to Cardinal Wolsey, then in the plenitude of his grandeur as Lord Chancellor of England. With his usual discernment, Wolsey saw that the "young college gentleman" could be made useful in the public service. Gardiner was appointed one of his private secretaries, where he soon convinced his patron of the skill and caution with which he drafted despatches, and offered suggestions on political affairs, which daily gave proof of his ability for diplomacy. The reader may judge of Wolsey's confidence in him from the manner in which he writes regarding him. He calls him, "*primarium secretissimorum consiliorum Secretarium, mei dimidium, et quo neminem habeo cariores*¹."

The treaty of alliance with Francis the First in 1525 being projected, Gardiner was employed to draw up the project, and the King, coming to his house at Moor Park, in Hertfordshire, found him busy at this work. Henry looked at it, liked the performance; the secretary's conversation still better, and his fertility in the invention of expedients best of all. From this time Gardiner was consulted about the most secret affairs of State. Soon afterwards he was made a Royal Chaplain, and Almoner to the King.

When the divorce of Katherine of Arragon was contemplated, Gardiner was considered as one of the most

¹ Burnet's "Reformation," No. viii.; Campbell's "Chancellors," vol. ii.

useful men for giving advice on that question; his reputation as a jurist and canonist stood high, and, it is said, his Sovereign placed unlimited confidence in his honesty and judgment. These were, unhappily, convertible terms at the time. "Misled by his ambition," says Lord Campbell, "and eager to conform to the King's humours, he now (1525-8), and for several years afterwards, took a part of which he deeply repented when he became the great supporter of the Papal power in England, and the Chancellor and Prime Minister of the daughter of Katherine of Arragon²."

In 1528, Gardiner, as secretary to Cardinal Wolsey, wrote the following letter to Pope Clement the Seventh:—"Unless some other resolution be taken than I perceive you intend to make, hereupon shall be gathered a marvellous opinion of your Holiness, of the College of Cardinals, of the authority of this see. The King's Highness and the nobles of the realm (England), who shall be made privy to this shall needs think that your Holiness and these most reverend and learned counsellors, either will not answer in this cause, or cannot answer. If you will not, if you do not choose to point out the way to an erring man, the care of whom is by God committed to you, they will say to you, 'O race of men most ungrateful and of your proper office most oblivious; you who should be simple as doves, are full of all deceit, and craft, and dissembling. If the King's cause be good, we require that you pronounce it good; if it be bad, why will you not say that it is bad, and so hinder a prince to whom all are so much bounden, from longer continuing with it? We ask nothing of

² Lord Campbell's "English Chancellors," vol. ii., p. 41.

you but justice, which the King so loves and values, that whatever sinister things others may say or think of him, he will follow that with all his heart; that, and nothing else, whether it be for the marriage or against the marriage³."

Again, Gardiner informs the Pope of the likelihood of dissent in case the Pontiff should not yield to Henry's desire. The question lay upon what was, at one side, considered an eternal principle in opposition to man's fleeting passions. The Pope stood upon a pediment which all Christendom had hitherto believed the base of Christian virtue, and refused to palter with a worldly power. The letter which follows only goes to prove that Gardiner was more willing to become rebel to the "Seven Hills," when a clergyman, than as a prelate in his latter days. He foreshadows that change in England whose work was just then commencing in Germany.

"If the King's Highness and the nobility of England (writes Gardiner), being persuaded of your good will to answer if you can do so, shall be brought to doubt of your ability, they will be forced to a harder conclusion respecting this See—namely, that God has taken from it the key of knowledge; and they will begin to give better ear to that opinion of some persons to which they have as yet refused to listen, that those Papal laws which neither the Pope himself nor his Council can interpret, deserve only to be committed to the flames." He concludes by giving a warning to the Pope to "ponder well on the question at issue⁴."

In 1529, Gardiner was intriguing for his Royal master in Rome. His letters thence to Cardinal

³ Dr. Gardiner's Despatches to Cardinal Wolsey.

⁴ Lemon's State Papers, vols. i. and ii.

Wolsey reflect little credit on both. Neither Wolsey nor Gardiner could have been deceived by the King.

When Clement the Seventh was charged by Gardiner with "partiality and ingratitude" to the King, he made a memorable reply:—"The dangers of a disputed succession" (says the Pontiff) "in England will be much augmented if you adopt a course of proceeding contrary to right and justice in the case of Queen Katherine." . . . "I am ready to proceed with the cause according to the laws and canons laid down by the Church; and you must not require me, through respect or gratitude to man—whether he be of high or low state—to violate the immutable commandments of God⁵."

Gardiner must be considered, in the early stages of the divorce, as the agent of Wolsey. Ribadeneyra, a Spanish Jesuit, ascribes to Wolsey the scheme to divorce Katherine of Arragon, and his "motives were to be found in the dislike he had for Charles the Fifth, and for Katherine as his aunt." Pollini, a Dominican father, makes a similar charge against the Cardinal, but in a "narrative more copious in its style and circumstances⁶." Cardinal Pole believes that the question did not originate with Wolsey; whilst Le Grand believes that it did. Lingard remarks—"Whether the idea of a divorce arose spontaneously in Henry's mind, or was suggested by the officiousness of others may be uncertain, but the royal wish was no sooner communicated to Wolsey than he offered his aid, and ventured to promise complete success. His views, however, were very different

⁵ The reader will perceive that the opinion expressed in this work of Pope Clement's policy during the divorce controversy is similar to that stated by Lingard, vol. iv., p. 481; and also by Pallavicino.

⁶ Pollini's "Eccl. Hist. of England," pp. 16—20.

from those of his Sovereign. Either unapprised of the King's intentions in favour of Anna, or persuading himself that the present amour would terminate like so many others, he looked forward to the political consequences of the divorce, and that he might 'perpetuate' the alliance between England and France, had already selected for the successor of Katherine, René, the daughter of Louis the Twelfth⁷." A dishonest policy, no doubt, but it bore the aspect of statesmanship. Of course we know not what might have been Wolsey's procedure had his fall not intervened; but we have Gardiner persevering to the last in favour of Anna Boleyn, up to the crowning wrong in the pronouncement at Dunstable, and immediately afterwards holding the lappet of her robe at the coronation.

Of Gardiner's sincerity in the divorce controversy, there is far less reason to doubt than in the case of any others who participated in that now acknowledged wrong. Throughout he contended that the dispensation of Julius the Second was obtained under false pretences; but the evidence adduced on behalf of his Royal master did not satisfy Clement the Seventh, nor his ecclesiastical counsellors. When the case was heard before Campeggio and Wolsey, at Blackfriars, Gardiner was the leading counsel for the King; and it is stated by the chronicles and letters of the times, that his speech was remarkable for its extensive learning, eloquence, and ability. There were several English canonists of high repute who held the same views of the divorce as those contended for by Gardiner; but looking to the future, and fearing the troubles of a disputed succession and the present

⁷ Lingard, vol. iv., pp. 481, 482.

menaces of ecclesiastic change and monastic confiscation, they were chary of expressing their opinions. Still those who supported the divorce were not sustained by fact nor justice. Before the dispensation of Julius was obtained, evidence was adduced which satisfied all manner of persons ; and Dr. Gardiner's opinion, reticent for so long a time, may be set down as a convenient resurrection of conscience at the command of a master who sought, under false pretences, a fresher love. No student of history or of mankind can doubt the truth of the wronged wife's reiterated testimony as to the principal fact upon which Pope Julius granted the dispensation for her marriage—a decision never disputed, but often ostentatiously rejoiced in—until Anna Boleyn crossed the stage in this momentous drama.

In 1529 we find Anna Boleyn corresponding with Gardiner, then at Rome. She writes :—

“ Maister Stephen,

“ I thank you for my letter, wherein I perceive the willing and faithful mind you have to do me pleasure, not doubting but as much as it is possible for man's wit to imagine you will do. I pray God to send you well speed in all your matters, so that you will put me in a study how to render you high service. I do trust in God you shall not repent it, and that the end of this journey shall be more pleasant to me than your first ; for that was but a rejoicing hope, which, ceasing, the lack of it does put to the more pain, and they that are partakers with me, as you do know. Therefore, I do trust that this hard beginning shall make the better ending.

“ Maister Stephen, I send you herewith the ‘cramp-

rings' for yourself, and Maister Gregorie (Cassoli), and Maister Peter; and pray you to distribute them, and assure them that I will be glad to do them any pleasure (good) which may be in my power. And thus I make an end, praying God send you good health.

“Written at Greenwich the 4th day of April, 1529.

“By your assured friend,

“ANN BOLLEIN^s.”

Like the Kings of England curing the evil by their touch, the Queens possessed, or were supposed to possess, the power of consecrating cramp-rings. But Ann Boleyn was not a Queen in 1529, and could not therefore perform the ceremony. Gardiner, however, received the rings with due thankfulness, because its receipt must flatter Anne as acknowledging her right to the queenly station; but as to its virtue, Gardiner's belief can be easily estimated.

In Burnet's Records is to be seen the Latin formula of the ancient office of the English Queens blessing cramp-rings. It commences with the Psalm of “*Deus misereatur nostri*,” then follows a Latin prayer invoking the aid of the Holy Spirit. The rings lying in one basin, or more, a prayer was said over them: the rings were of silver, *not* iron, as is supposed. They were to “expel all livid venom of serpents.” The rings were blessed with an invocation to the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, and signed frequently with the Cross: in the last benediction the request is made “that the rings may restore contracted nerves.” A Psalm of benediction follows, and a prayer “against the frauds of devils.” The prayers being repeated again, “the Queen's Grace rubbeth the rings between her

^s The above letter is to be seen in the State Paper Office.

hands, saying, ‘*Sanctifice, Domine, annulos istos,*’ &c.” The rest of the prayer implies that “as her hands rub the rings, the virtue of the holy oil wherewith she was anointed might be infused into their metal, and by the grace of God be efficacious.” The ceremony concludes with holy water being poured into the basins, and the Litany repeated.

Mary Tudor performed this ceremony when Queen, and it is possible that Gardiner, as Bishop of Winchester, and Chancellor of England, was present. If he was present, it was a moment to awaken the memory of one sad event, at least, in Henry’s reign. As to the King’s “touching for the evil,” Charles the First and Second are oftener mentioned as practising it than most Monarchs, and Francis the First was liberal in his “touchings.” The service is to be found in Sparrow’s “Collection of Canons,” 1675, and was continued and acted on even up to the reign of Queen Anne, if not later. Queen Anne being monarch in her own right, claimed the privilege and performed the rite. The Gospel of St. Mark, was first recited, and upon the words being repeated, “they (the Apostles) shall lay their hands on the sick, and they shall recover,” the direction is, “Here the infirm persons are presented to the King upon their knees, and the King layeth his hand upon them.”

To return to Dr. Gardiner. Lord Campbell in his “English Chancellors,” falls into a popular error as to Jane Seymour. “Death,” he says, “delivered Gardiner from the apprehensions he entertained of the ascendancy of Jane Seymour⁹.” The inference to be drawn from this passage is, that Jane Seymour was the secret

⁹ Lord Campbell’s “English Chancellors,” vol. ii., p. 44.

friend of the Reformers, who, by the way, at that time made no public professions of any creed; because they dared not. Jane Seymour was in no way connected with the Reformers. She detested them as bitterly as did Gardiner. She did not even seek their political support, as had Anna Boleyn. The only dislike Gardiner could have had to Jane Seymour must have been caused by the means through which she reached the throne, and the unpopularity of her family with the parties then prevalent at Court. About the time of Anna Boleyn's death, Gardiner began to perceive the wrong steps he had taken. The web woven by Audley, Rich, Cranmer, and Cromwell, was one that appeared likely to prove fatal for a time to the fortunes of the olden creed; and with that acute discernment for which he was remarkable, he withdrew from his course, and joined the old Conservative party. From that hour forward he was perhaps the most zealous man in England in the maintenance of Catholic principles; yet still, with human weakness, indulged the King in his claim to the Headship of the Church. This policy was, both actively and passively, acquiesced in by several bishops and abbots, with the alternative of the scaffold or the dungeon. There seemed no English prelate so useful to the King as Gardiner, because his private character had always been unchallenged. Having been sent on an embassy to Germany, he was shocked at the conduct he there witnessed of the Anabaptists and other "Reformers." On his return to England he detailed to the King "all he had seen and heard concerning the new heresy," which Denny relates made an impression on his royal master, for from that hour forward Henry's feeling towards the

Reformers was of an unmistakable character; still he continued to be attracted by the artifices of Lord Cromwell, who engaged to replenish the royal treasury from the coffers of the Church, but "not to disturb its doctrines." Gardiner was not satisfied with such a proceeding. He had frequent interviews with the King on the subject. Of the result of those interviews, towards the close of Henry's reign Gardiner was out-manceuvred in every way by the cunning and powerful influence of Cranmer.

There is one fact in relation to Gardiner which reflects credit on his name. Whilst many of the so-called Papal party were as unscrupulous as the Reformers in confiscating Monastic property, Stephen Gardiner did not receive the smallest portion of the plunder. To use his own words, "he was himself unmercifully plucked by the Reformers."

In his diplomatic character, Gardiner was more energetic than courteous in dealing with foreign ministers. In one of his despatches to the Bishop of Arras (1544), concerning a dispute between King Henry and the Emperor Charles V., he addressed his brother Prelate in these words:—"Sorry am I, for the credit of our order, that you should have taken a part in this farce at a time, when, if there be a knavish action performed anywhere, a bishop is ever suspected of having played a chief hand in it¹." Mr. Froude says Gardiner could "lay on the lash;" but he certainly had more than his match as a political intriguer in the representative of Charles V. The conduct of both prelates was equally to be regretted. Amongst the missions in which Gardiner was engaged for Henry was one for the

¹ State Papers, vol. x., p. 193.

purpose of "explaining to the Duke of Saxe and other foreign princes, that Dr. Fisher and Sir Thomas More were executed for high-treasonable practices." Dr. Gardiner was instructed by Cromwell to inform those princes that they "should not believe the false gossip and scandals that the enemies of his Highness the King had propagated on the Continent respecting the demerits of the traitors who had died on the scaffold²." In other words, Gardiner was enjoined to traduce the characters of the two illustrious victims, so as to diminish, if not efface, the impression of horror caused by Henry's act of tyranny. As the reader is already aware, both these good men declared at the block that they had come there to die for the olden faith of Europe, their sole crime, indeed, being a virtuous refusal to acknowledge the self-assumed title of the King to be the vicegerent of Christ. When we reflect that Gardiner was at this time in holy orders, we can form from his conduct in undertaking so foul an employment an estimate of the sorrowful depth to which fear or ambition may sink a man in evil times. In his diplomatic missions, like Cranmer, Gardiner was the mere creature of the King. Henry found in Cranmer, Sir William Paget, and Gardiner, the most pliant representatives of the Royal will; and the King understood all three so accurately that he set aside for each some fitting office. Gardiner's foreign policy was, however, in the main unsuccessful, not from any want of sagacity or courage, but from the conflict between political interests and the opinions which the Reformation was setting forth. Gardiner made a vain endeavour to

² Cromwell's instructions to Gardiner are to be found at the Record Office, amongst Cromwell's papers.

serve antagonistic powers—the King of England and the Papal Court—bound to one by love of country, and personal affection to his Sovereign, it may be by ambition for worldly honours—to the other, by the ties of conscience and the solemn vows he had made to the ancient religion : yet, finally, he won neither the confidence of the King nor that of the Pontiff—another proof of the truth of the inspired proverb that none can virtuously serve two masters. It is difficult at present, even with all the light thrown upon those times by recent discoveries made by Bergenroth at Simancas, and by our calendarers of disjointed papers at home, to manifest the *motives* of the leading men of the period. But then the motives of men are inscrutable. It seems that the documents concerning this period of Henry the Eighth's reign are far more plentiful at Vienna than in London or Simancas—Charles the Fifth having left a vast correspondence, which is now in the archives of Vienna. A learned Spanish gentleman (Señor de Gayangos) has undertaken to calendar the papers in the Austrian capital and at Brussels, at the former of which cities many original letters of Queen Katherine have been found. There are also proofs in the Vienna records, we have been informed, showing that Wolsey, Cromwell, the Duke of Norfolk, and other English ministers and courtiers were regular pensioners of Charles the Fifth. This is not new in England. Charles the Second had 200,000 pounds a year from Louis of France ; and Sydney and Russell, the great Puritan “patriots,” were pensioners of the same monarch.

“Stephen Gardiner,” writes Lord Campbell, “was no enthusiast ; he was not naturally cruel, nor bigoted

in his creed ; having several times shown that he could make professions of doctrine bend to political expediency. . . . When some zealous Catholics urged the imprisonment of Peter Martyr, Dr. Gardiner pleaded that he had come over by an invitation from a former government, and he furnished him with money to return to Germany. As a statesman Gardiner is to be praised for great discernment and vigour. He had even a regard for the liberties as well as independence of his country, and on several memorable occasions gave constitutional advice to the Sovereigns whom he served. But whatever good intentions he had, they were all under the control of ambition, and never obstructed his rise. In the various turns of his fortune he displayed a happy lubricity of conscience, which surmounted or evaded every obstacle, convincing him that his duty coincided with his interests. Though his strong sense and persuasive manners gave him an appearance of sincerity, he had an insidious cast of his eye, which indicated that he was always lying in wait ; and he acquired at last such a character for craft and dissimulation, that the saying went, ‘My lord of Winchester is like Hebrew—to be read backwards.’ . . . Bishop Gardiner lived in great style at Winchester House in Southwark, where he retained a number of young gentlemen of good family, as his pages, and whose education he superintended. His establishment at Southwark was the last of this kind in England, for Cardinal Pole did not live long enough to form a great household at Lambeth, and after the Reformation the bishops’ palaces were filled with their wives and children³.”

In the reign of Henry, Gardiner frequently flattered

³ Lord Campbell’s “English Chancellors,” vol. ii.

the King "on his extensive knowledge of theology, and his many amiable virtues." By this conduct he brought contempt upon his order, far more to be deprecated than if the contempt had been bestowed upon himself. In *De Vera Obedientia*, Gardiner states that King Henry acted in the case of the royal supremacy with the "consent of the most excellent and learned Bishops, of the nobles, and the whole people of England." The statement is untrue. Many passages in the book alluded to prove the accommodating spirit in which it was written. No doubt Gardiner derived much of his inspiration from Edmund Bonner, with whom he so frequently consulted. At Henry's death Gardiner preached the funeral sermon, in which he lamented the loss that "both high and low" had sustained in the death of so "good and gracious a King." "Oh death, where is thy sting?" might not his contemporaries sneeringly exclaim, when Stephen Gardiner pronounced the euthanasia of our British Vitellius!

Upon the accession of Queen Mary, Doctor Gardiner wrote a book entitled "*PALINODIA DICTA LIBERI*," which he recommended to Hooper for perusal, when on his trial before him for perjury and heresy. Hooper rejected his arguments, and referred him back to the days when they both took the oath of Supremacy to King Henry VIII. "I did not think," said Hooper, "that the author of *DE VERA OBEDIENTIA* could be so inconsistent." But those were the days of inconsistency and dishonesty; and Hooper himself was just as inconsistent as Gardiner had ever been. In fact, the connexion of clerics with State affairs had, in those days, a most injurious effect upon the interests of religion.

THE CLERICAL REFORMERS AND THEIR SPOUSES.

MM. DE MEAUX and Bayle state that an ecclesiastic who was not married “gave rise to suspicions that he had not renounced the dogma of celibacy.” “*Je crois,*” says Bayle, “que Bucer insinua cette raison à Calvin lorsqu’il le pressa de se marier” (“I believe that Bucer suggested this reason to Calvin when he pressed him to marry”). The “Visitors” appointed in the reign of Edward the Sixth, “exhorted all ecclesiastics to marry, as a sure sign of their abjuration of Popery.” Ecolampadius, a Brigittine monk, was the first priest in Germany who took advantage of the licence given by Protestantism to enjoy the lay luxury of a comely young wife. On this marriage Erasmus wrote:—“Ecolampadius has taken to himself a wife—a pretty young girl: he wants, I suppose, to mortify himself. Some call Lutheranism a tragedy; but I call it a comedy, where the distress generally ends in a wedding.” By the way, this wife of the noted Reformer seemed to have been a pluralist in Reforming espousals. Her first husband was Ludovicus Cellarius; her second, Ecolampadius, a priest; her third, Wolfgang Capito, a most active Reformer; and her fourth, the Dominican friar, Martin Bucer, a cherished apostle of the English Reformation. Bucer himself was not without experience in marriage, for he had four wives—one of them a nun, who bore him thirteen children. Of this fruitful female Reformer, the cynical Bayle remarked:—“It would have been a pity that a lass so fit to multiply should remain in a convent.” The readiness with which, in return for his protection and patronage, Luther,

Melancthon, and Bucer, gave a "Church Dispensation" to the wicked and licentious Philip of Hesse to commit bigamy and adultery, has never been explained, much less excused. Can men abuse religion to such foul purposes without that religion receiving damage, or at least exciting question as to its purity? The reasons given by the Landgrave to his spiritual physicians were worthy of him and them. He assured them that a second wife was quite necessary to his conscience, and that he would thereby be enabled to "live and die more gaily for the cause of the Gospel!" Fearful blasphemy, but eagerly condoned! The particulars of this profligate concession remained for a long time unknown, until the Elector Palatine, Charles Lewis, published the documents. Bossuet (liv. 6) and Bayle (*art. Luther*) furnish all the details.

Amongst the remarkable sayings of Bayle on record, is one, "that the day would arise, when the Lutherans, no longer finding their creed in the Augsburg Confession, would put all matters again on their former footing." Up to this time Bayle, who had none of the attributes of a prophet, has not had his vaticinations fulfilled. Germany and all the Northern nations which adopted Lutheranism manifest the vices of Luther and his *confrères*. Mysticism and transcendentalism are the profession of the intelligent: a brutal materialism the practice of the ignorant. Facility of divorce has erased married virtue; and the black-beer inspired and filthy "*Tidesh-reden*" of Luther and his brother "Reformers," has impregnated the north of Europe (especially Prussia) with a mere animal observance, held in hand by a thoroughly iron despotism. Sweden, the abode of Lutheranism *par excellence*, is the most

debased, drunken, and immoral nation of any which still acknowledge the dominion of Christianity⁴.

We cannot close this chapter without recurring to the names of two men who publicly boasted of having violated their vows of celibacy—that is, vaunted that they had taken oaths before God's altar, and, without reference to any higher authority than their own will, emerged self-relieved from the most sacred and solemn of dedications. Peter Martyr was born at Florence, in 1500. He was educated at the University of Padua, and in time became a canon of the Augustine order. For some years he seemed to have acted according to his vows; but, having committed sacrilege by the violation of those vows, he suddenly discerned the propriety of the proceedings entered upon by the German neosophists, and repaired to Germany, where he was received with open arms by the Reformers of that country. Thence he came to England, where his preaching was the source of great and bitter excitement—the more so as the “lower classes” (the most fitting term to use in a state of things where very few were intelligent, and society was merely divided by a line of social demarcation) were taught by him to disregard even temporal authority. Meanwhile his own life was the reverse of all moral requirement. He died at Strasbourg in 1562, after signalizing himself at the famous Conference at Poissy, where the only agreement amongst the Reformers seemed to be a desire to differ each from the other⁵.

⁴ See Audoin's “*Vie de Luther*,” *passim*; of which more hereafter.

⁵ Katherine Cathie, a German nun, wife of Peter Martyr, died at Cambridge, and in Mary's reign her body was disinterred, and cast upon a dunghill—as an evidence of execration for her sacrilegious connexion. (Anthony Wood, vol. ii., p. 134.)

Martin Bucer was a German friar. He was, says Dodd, the Church historian, "a kind of trimmer amongst the several sects of Reformers, and aimed at a Reformation according to his own taste." This seems to have been the prevailing notion of them all, when not attached to some potent prince, who had power to weld their theology, when he so pleased, to his own caprice. Bucer published a book against the celibacy of the clergy, in which all the crimes which he himself wished to commit, or did perpetrate, were set forth as arguments against others⁶. Although Archbishop Cranmer differed from Bucer, in many spoken and some written points, he invited him to England in 1549, and appointed him to a professorship in Cambridge, where he fully realized his patron's desire to injure the olden religion. Bucer, in this regard, did his utmost to deserve the patronage, and had the distinction of being buried in Cambridge in 1551. Dodd relates that in Queen Mary's reign Bucer's corpse was "dug up and burned"—a lamentable proof of the want of charity engendered by a revolution which not only aimed at the overthrow of long-cherished faith, but positively appropriated the patrimony of the poor. The ministers of Charles the Second condemned the corpse of an usurper to the gibbet and a grave at the gibbet's foot: in the even less intelligent condition of the people at Bucer's time, it must be deprecated though not much marvelled at, that one of the revolutionists who would rend the veil between the people and their holiest belief and traditions from the time of Augustine and Ethelbert, should have a last home in their sacred Cambridge.

⁶ Bishop Gardiner wrote an able answer to this work (1554), under the title of "*Exestasis Testimoniorum.*"

But, after all, it was not the people, nor a sense of virtue, disinterred the remains of Martin Bucer, but party hate and faction, misusing the name of religion, at that epoch so often miserably profaned.

CHARACTER OF THE MONASTIC INQUISITORS.—SECRET
INSTRUCTIONS OF LORD CROMWELL.

RICHARD LAYTON and Thomas Leigh received their early education in one of Wolsey's houses; they subsequently became spies under Cromwell on the Cardinal's domestics. Before Cromwell disclosed his plans, for a visitation of the Monastic Houses, to the King, he held many conferences with those "high-spirited young men," as Mr. Froude styles them, and being in Holy Orders, Cromwell considered their report or written evidence more valuable. Piers Dutton, Doctor London, and a person named Henry Price, were next consulted, and, of course, at once entered into the views of Cromwell. Henry Griffin says:—"I knew these men well; they were all smart men, who understood the value of money; could make plausible statements, and swear to what they said if it were necessary. I think the priests were the worst of the whole, although they had a good reputation at the time." Fuller observes:—"They were men who well understood the message they were sent on, and would not come back without a satisfactory answer to him that sent them, knowing themselves to be no losers thereby." Fuller merely repeats the general opinion of the inquisitors' contemporaries, and even of those who were most hostile to the monastic houses. In our own days, Dean Hook remarks that "the inquisitors knew what was expected at their hands, and they did not deceive the expecta-

tions of their employers." Layton made many suggestions as to how they should report on the condition of the Abbeys, declaring his belief that "they were all in a state of crime." Cromwell appeared to hesitate and doubt the statement, exclaiming, "By the Virgin I do not believe you, Maister Layton." He kindly took a week to reconsider the matter, but in the meantime Layton and his companions represented to him the enormous wealth the Abbeys possessed. "The King," said Layton, "will, of course, take the lands to be his own share; but then look to the quantities of gold, silver, and jewels the Abbeys have in their possession." At the end of the week Cromwell's hesitation seemed to have wholly vanished, and he was prepared with a programme of the action to lay before the King—the "questions to be put, and the investigation to be made." The King approved of the plan. But it is only just, even to Henry, to observe that the real mode in which the investigation was intended to be conducted was not then, if ever, fully imparted to Henry⁷.

Mr. Froude admits that Leigh and Layton were accused of having "borne themselves with overbearing insolence; and to have taken bribes, and, where bribes were not offered, to have extorted them from the houses which they spared." The houses which they spared! For what length of time were they spared? How many weeks or months? Again Mr. Froude says:—"That they went through their business roughly, is exceedingly probable." He believes it is "probable that they took money as bribes, because they candidly admitted it to be so." They are excused by Mr. Froude, on the plea that officials in those times were poorly paid. But

⁷ Thorndale's "Memorials of English Abbeys."

there are proofs that they helped themselves plentifully. Mr. Froude also acknowledges a fact which the State Papers record, that the "assistants or servants" of Leigh, Layton, London, Price, and the other commissioners, "had ridden along the highways, decked in the spoils of the desecrated chapels, with copes for doublets, tunics for saddle-cloths, and the silver relic cases hammered into sheathes for their daggers." These were desecrations and robberies which Henry VIII. would scarcely have sanctioned, at that time at least. They were perpetrated in many instances by spendthrift squires and sacrilegious monks—not the servants of the Inquisitors as they have been represented*. Burnet declares them to be "zealous adherents of the pure Gospel:" and Mr. Froude looks on them as men burning with Puritan indignation at the immoralities of the monasteries.

In another passage Mr. Froude states "that the practices of the Romish creed were departed from—that the fasts and abstinences were little observed," whilst Dr. Brewer, who has waded through tons of contemporary records, avers as the result of his researches, that the fasts were far better observed in England, in those days, than in France.

Mr. Froude departs from his great guide, Burnet, in the exceptionless implacability of his hatred to the old religious houses, for both the otherwise false bishop and the atheist historian, Hume, now and again permit a ray of sunlight to shine upon the convents. On reference to vol. i., p. 328, of Burnet, we find him stating, that "many convents of women lived in the most irreproachable manner." Hume, who

* Thorndale's "Memorials of English Abbeys," p. 22.

occasionally follows the track of Burnet and Speed, draws a distinction between the monasteries and convents. He argues in favour of the nunneries as a "retreat for females whose family were dead, or whose means were limited." "A woman of respectable family" (he says), "who failed in procuring a settlement in the married state—an accident to which such ladies were more liable than women of a lower station—had really no rank which she properly filled; a convent therefore was a retreat both honourable and agreeable, from the inutility, and often want, which attended the situation of such ladies⁹."

The commissioners were ordered by Cromwell to ascertain with accuracy how far the days of fasting and abstinence were observed in the monastic houses; if the rules of the respective orders were carried out; "rising at two o'clock, and at others at four in the morning;" questions were put to young nuns of an indecent character as to their chastity; one high-spirited young lady gave Dr. London a box in the eye; in another convent Layton's conduct was so bad that he received a severe personal punishment from some half-dozen nuns, who, pushing him into a corner, beat him soundly with their sandals, until one of Cromwell's servants, who accompanied Layton, came to his rescue¹. There were few of the nuns who were not possessed of articles of jewellery—family memorials, gold and silver crosses, little silver cases for relics, &c., all of which they were compelled to give up; others secreted their jewellery in "holes and corners," for which a diligent search was made, and, upon their detection, the owners

⁹ Hume's "History of England" (quarto), p. 220.

¹ Thorndale's "Memorials of English Abbeyes;" Griffin's "Chronicle."

were denounced "as thieves, stealing that which in law belonged to the King's highness." The domestics of many convents were promised "money and clothing if they made certain statements on oath;" the "statements on oath" were not suggested by Layton, Leigh, Price, or London, for they were too cunning to do so; but by Cromwell's alleged servants; also by Edward and John Lee, two "high-spirited brothers," whose sister was at that time mistress to Cromwell. The "servants and attendants" knew of what the commissioners wanted "proof." In fact the commissioners were as deeply implicated in perjury, slander, and robbery as their subordinates. There was no lack of virtuous indignation at the "awful discoveries;" no lack of ingenious swearing—"loose affidavits," as Lord Mansfield long afterwards mildly termed such attestations; no lack of appeals to the "Virgin Mother, and to the Court of Heaven." Lord Cromwell required every accusation against the monastic houses to be "solemnly" sworn to. It is needless to add that no legal practitioner ever sustained a client's case with a greater nicety of swearing as to "day, date, and circumstance," than did the monastic inquisitors, and those mysterious individuals styled "their servants and assistants." And again, to furnish the best show of likelihood, some of the reports were declared "unsatisfactory, and had to be amended," and, of course, were supplemented with the desired amount of precise and critical perjury.

The most remarkable man amongst the monastic inquisitors was the Rev. John London, Dean of Wallingford. Cromwell was well aware of his private character being bad. London contracted a clandestine marriage whilst under vows of celibacy as a priest; he was unprincipled in every relation of life; a liar, a blasphemer,

and an adulterer; convicted of perjury; convicted of incest and seduction; convicted of violating some of the nuns of Godstowe, whilst acting as Cromwell's inquisitor; as great a gambler as King Henry himself; a fervid upholder of the sanguinary Six Acts, a spy and persecutor of those Reformers whom he had once admonished to hold no intercourse with Rome; the flatterer of Anna Boleyn, and the proximate traducer of her memory; the slanderer of Catherine Parr, the secret spy of Gardiner, whilst at the same time the agent of Hertford; the tool of Archbishop Cranmer, whose instructions, like Piers Dutton, he had followed during his monastic visitation. At a later date, when Cromwell had been consigned to the block, Dr. London was constituted the chief agent under the Six Acts, to ferret out holders of Protestant opinions. This office he performed with cruelty, accompanied by perjury and fraud. Under the Six Acts he consigned to the flames at Windsor three Reformers for adhering to the Shibboleth which it had pleased the monarch to change.

Lingard, judging from the weight of evidence against Dr. London, considers him to have been "dishonest and profligate." Burnet finds fault with London's conduct in carrying out the Six Acts, but does not believe that "he was the bad man described by historians." The motive for this defence is obvious. Burnet being well aware that London was the chief of the monastic inquisitors, and the man who drew up Cromwell's report on the alleged crimes of monks and nuns, it would, of course, weaken the effects of that report upon the mind of posterity, if they were informed that the man who inspected the abbeys and convents,

and "reported thereon," was an "unmitigated liar, a blasphemer, an adulterer, a dicer, and a drunkard;" whilst, at the same time, "blaspheming religion by publicly discharging clerical duties as Dean of Wallingford." Burnet must have seen Lowth's memoir of London, and Pomeroy's character of him, which was derived from the Bishop of Rochester's secretary (Griffin), who was personally acquainted with London. Speed, Oldmixon, and many of the "hot Gospel writers," are silent as to the infamy of London at the time of Lord Cromwell's inquisition; but he was "thoroughly bad," according to them, when enforcing the Six Acts. No doubt he was; but not worse than he had been in the days of his monastic visitation. Foxe, Herbert, Hall, Pomeroy, Heylin, Soames, Collier, Jenkins, Dugdale, Lowth, Wood, Rapin, Hume, Froude, Hook, Blunt, and many other writers throw some light on the proceedings and character of Dr. London; yet, after all, the particulars of the inquisition, and the conduct of the chief actors are but imperfectly known. Is not the motive for the suppression by Protestant writers, of a description of the character of Cromwell's inquisitors sufficiently patent? They could not with sufficient consistency, even for their too credulous readers, applaud the confiscation and destruction of the religious houses, on account of offences, the ascription of which rested solely on the evidence of men branded themselves with numerous and hideous crimes. Hence the reticence of Protestant writers up to recent times. Of course it would not do to damage the witness in a cause which was to be commended and upheld. On this subject there is no authority in existence to compare with the Rev. Mr. Blunt. This learned

and eminent Protestant divine has spent many years of a valuable life in searching the public records: his experience is not of history, but of facts, not of opinions, but of documents. Here is a summary of that conscientious eye-witness of the proofs as to the character of the three principal commissioners or inquisitors—London, Leigh, and Layton—that they were “obscene, profligate, and perjured.” And he adds, “the more these accusations are brought into the daylight and confronted with the accused, the less trustworthy their accusations appear.” Further on the case will be made conclusive when we come to consider the forged “confessions,” and other performances of these inquisitors and their subordinates, who were every way worthy of their detestable superiors.

Thomas Corden, a gentleman of the bedchamber to King Henry, Maister Sadler, and Sir Piers Dutton, were also invested by Cromwell with the power of visiting the monastic houses, and “making reports thereon to Dr. London or Dean Layton.” Corden received some “manors besides large presents,” for the “services he rendered to the King.” He was in every way adapted to be the subordinate of Dr. London. Ralph Sadler was a “young gentleman” of varied ability. He is described as cunning, crafty, far-seeing, needy, sordid, and deceitful. His “religious principles” were shaped to meet the circumstances of the times; he was a movable Catholic, fashioned according to the King’s views, and would consign heretics to the flames with as little compunction as he might send a beggar to the stocks, or hang a Papist for denying the King’s supremacy. He was engaged on an embassy to Scotland, in which he acquitted himself to the satisfaction

of his sovereign. He fought at the battle of Musselburgh, where he showed as much ability for military affairs as in diplomacy, and on his return to England was created a knight-banneret. Lord Cromwell considered him to be a "very useful man;" Archbishop Cranmer believed him to be "too clever for his time;" and again, he thought "he would make a stern gaoler or a crafty spy." Cranmer deemed it his policy to keep such men attached to his interests. In Edward's reign Sadler openly joined the Reformers, when his fortune again increased. Upon the accession of Mary, he resumed the "religion" of the Pembrokes and Pagets; and when the reign of Elizabeth commenced, to use the words of Bishop Jewell, he "finally shook off the dust of Popery from his soul." Unhappily, these many "conversions" do not seem to have improved the good qualities of this moral Proteus. In Elizabeth's time he became an important public man, but as the gaoler of the Queen of Scots, Sir Ralph Sadler displayed the worst characteristics of his nature. A contemporary has written:—"It would be difficult to say whether Sadler or Walsingham was the most cruel persecutor of unfortunate Mary Stuart." In one of Sadler's letters to Walsingham, he insinuates the advisability of her murder, and observes: "I see no end to this matter unless by the death of this woman I am sent to guard." In another communication, he tells Burleigh, "If she moves a step out of my sight, she shall not outlive it long." In early life Sadler received many favours from Mary's mother, for which he expressed his thankfulness in a letter still extant. Seeing the danger surrounding the office of gaoler of the captive queen, he resigned his trust. He amassed

large wealth, and was esteemed by the rising Puritans of his time as a "God-fearing man²." Walsingham professed much friendship for him; both were, however, equally ready to betray each other, if it suited their interest. Such was the after-life career of one of the most respectable of Cromwell's inquisitors. Sir Piers Dutton was another of the men who illustrated Cromwell's commission. He received presents, and made promises of using his influence to conciliate the King; but he possessed no power with either the minister or the monarch. Burnet admits these charges to be true, and censures Dutton. The conduct of his "servants and assistants" was worthy of their master. He confined his own duties principally to the manly task of suborning the female domestics of convents. He subsequently condescended to give a general apology for his conduct. "Time disclosed" (he says) "the real character of nuns and friars, and it would have been a sin to hold faith with such bad people." Yet on his death-bed he informed Henry Griffin, and Dr. Woolcey, that "many of the reports he had made to Lord Cromwell were false, and that he felt great remorse for the character he had given some nunneries, for which he had no foundation; that he had taken presents from the nuns, and acted with treachery in return. He hoped God would forgive him for these crimes, as well as many others³." There were, indeed, other men engaged in Cromwell's visitation, who acted in an honest and honourable spirit, but *their* returns were suppressed, and themselves quickly superseded.

² Sir Walter Scott's "Life and Correspondence of Sir Ralph Sadler."

³ Griffin's Chronicle.

In fact, such men were accused of being bribed by the inmates of the religious houses, and no reports but those tending to a foregone conclusion, and to invite confiscation, were reckoned at head-quarters as accurate or true.

Price, another of Cromwell's inquisitors, thus writes to his employer of a brother commissioner, named Leigh:—"In his movements he is too insolent and pompaticque; he handleth the fathers where he cometh very roughly, and many times for small causes, as the Abbots of Bruton and Stevely, for not meeting him at the gate, when they had no warning of his coming. . . . The man is young and of intolerable elation of mind. In his visitation he refuseth many times 'his reward' (bribe), though it be competent, for that they offer him so little, and maketh them send after him such rewards as may please him. Surely religious men were never so afraid of Dr. Allen as they be of him, he useth such rough fashion with them. He hath twelve men waiting on him in livery, besides his own brother, who must be rewarded specially, and then his 'other servants.'"

Of all the inquisitors Dr. Leigh was a most cruel and unmanly slanderer of the nuns; from whom he extorted money and jewels to a large amount, threatening them with the punishment of treason, imprisonment, and the rack.

Dr. Layton naturally enjoyed Cromwell's confidence. Anthony Wood states that he did much to please the King, and that he "pandered to his gross immoralities." His letters on the monastic commission are highly indecent, and have been evidently penned by one whose mind was familiar with immorality in its

most disgusting forms. In a despatch to Cromwell, he says, "I will tell you something to make you laugh." * * * * * In another of his numerous letters to Lord Cromwell, he expresses his gratitude to him for "the patronage and benefits he derived from him." "I should be nothing but a 'basket-bearer' but for you." From his obscurity, in a brief period Cromwell's interest raised this sacrilegious malefactor to some high and lucrative positions in the Church. He was Dean of Chester-le-street, Archdeacon of Buckingham, and Dean of York. He gave Cromwell 100*l.* "bribe" to make him Chancellor of Sarum: and whilst Dean of York he pledged the cathedral plate⁴, so that the Chapter had to redeem it after his death, which occurred in 1543. Herbert Huddleston, of Cambridge, who knew him well, writes of Layton as "a hypocrite in religion and a knave in worldly dealings." When on his death-bed in Brussels, Layton was visited by Sir William Paget, who describes him as being in a most desponding condition, and repeatedly expressing his dread of meeting death⁵. Dean Hook is of opinion that the Pilgrims of Grace have to some extent borne out their charges of "bribery, extortion, and some abominable actions against Dean Layton and his colleague Legh." Oldmixon contends that "the inquisitors selected were all zealous Papists." This is only confirming the statements of Burnet and Speed. Zeal is not always a virtue. If those men were virtuous Papists there can be little doubt that Lord Cromwell and his secret adviser, Cranmer, would not have appointed them upon such a commission as that of

⁴ The plate of this cathedral was subsequently confiscated.

⁵ Paget's "Correspondence," State Papers.

inquiring into the monastic houses. In every step taken by Lord Cromwell against the monastic houses, he was privately and publicly sustained by ecclesiastics who were, it is alleged, "men of high character." It is of little consequence whether those "men of high character" became Reformers or repented of their "evil course," as has been stated in the case of Dr. London. Some Catholic writers, whether from mistaken sentiment, or a false sense of charity, have concealed the errors and crimes of persons of their own creed. Such a policy has often proved detrimental to the reputation of Catholics in the eyes of Protestants. Neither the cleric nor the layman should be permitted to escape censure for criminality or hypocrisy, for the ultimate triumph of Truth can no more be hidden from posterity than the light of the sun. Nevertheless, it seems almost an established maxim with Protestant writers on the Reformation epoch, to conceal, or misrepresent, the evil qualities of their heroes and heroines, and to blacken the reputation of those belonging to the antagonistic creeds. Catholics find fault with Lingard for exposing the misdeeds of some of the Catholic clergy, whilst Protestants express strong doubts of the orthodoxy or religious sympathy of writers like Brewer, Stephenson, Hook, Blunt, and Maitland, for setting down the results of their recent researches, exclaiming—"They relate many things they should not, and place the Reformers in the worst light." It must be remembered that the facts given by these gentlemen have been made but recently available; and it is fortunate for the cause of truth, that men of such honour and probity should have been pioneers amongst the latest historical discoverers. We cannot do better on

this subject than quote the opinion of Dr. Maitland, on the bearing and faults of Catholic and Protestant writers concerning the Reformation:—"It is true enough," says Dr. Maitland, "that each party abused the other, and that many keen, severe, false, and malicious things were put forth by the Roman Catholic party; but for senseless cavilling, scurrilous railing, and ribaldry, for the most offensive personalities, for the reckless imputation of the worst motives and most odious vices—in short, for all that was calculated to render an opponent hateful in the eyes of those who were no judges of the matter in dispute, some of the Puritan party went far beyond their adversaries. I do not want to defend the Romish writers, and I hope I have no partiality for them, or for the errors, heresies, and superstitions which they are concerned to maintain; but it really appears to be only simple truth to say that, whether from good or bad motives, they did in fact abstain from that fierce, truculent, and abusive language, that loathsome ribaldry, which characterised the style of too many of the Puritan writers."

To return to another phase in the proceedings of the inquisitors. A large number of the monks and abbots were compelled to sign documents which they had never read; and those papers were "confessions of immorality and drunkenness, a disregard to all religion, and that, as they were so unworthy, they wished to surrender all they possessed to the King." "Those documents," says Mr. Blunt, "looked like malicious forgeries got up by such profligate and unscrupulous men as London, Layton, and Legh." The returns made to Cromwell of the manner in which churches, abbeys, and libraries were demolished, is more like the

relation of some Oriental barbarism than that of educated Englishmen, far less ecclesiastics. Dr. London has left on record many accounts of his visitations. "At Reading," he says, "I did only deface the church, all the windows being full of friars, and left the roof and walls whole for the King's use. In Aylesbury I only sold the glass windows and their ornaments, with their utensils. I left the house whole, and only defaced the church. At Warwick I defaced the church windows, the cells, and the dormitory, as I did in every place, save Bedford, where there were few buyers⁶." An order was issued by Lord Cromwell respecting the visitation of "parish and cathedral" churches, to the effect that "tin" should be substituted for gold and silver chalices⁷. The confiscation of chalices was therefore something enormous, the average being from six to ten each. Some churches had gold chalices of great value, which had been presented by parishioners and clerics at various times.

There are still extant a few letters of Catherine Bulkeley, the Abbess of Godstowe, to Lord Cromwell, complaining of Dr. London's conduct to herself and the sisterhood:—"Dr. London doth suddenly come unto me with a great party with him, and doth threaten me and my sisters, saying that he hath the King's commission to suppress this house in spite of my teeth. When I showed him plain that I would never surrender to his band, *being an ancient enemy to us*, then he begins to entreat me, and like a cunning fox he doth attempt to inveigle and deceive the sisters one by one,

⁶ MSS. in the Rolls House.

⁷ Supp. of Monas., Camden Society Papers; Ellis's Original Letters.

in a way that the King's subjects were never before handled. And although we are weak, lonely women, we will not surrender our house and property, which are ours lawfully, unless the King's Highness doth command us to do the same. Dr. London, like an untrue man, doth tell divers wicked things of us, which we declare before the altar, and in the name of the Holy Trinity, to be untrue and malicious^s." The writer of this letter, of which the above is a summary, in her three "remonstrances" to Cromwell, protests against the accusations of London. The insolent conduct of his followers; their sneers and taunts; the foul epithets, the bribing of servants, the indecent outrages on the young nuns; the plunder of gold and silver ornaments, relic cases, crosses; the signing of alleged confessions of crime, and other stratagems practised by London and his inquisitors, are set forth in indignant language. Let it be well understood that there was no Parliamentary statute passed, legalizing the visitation of the religious houses, or the confiscation of their property, until that confiscation had taken place. All was done at the command of Henry, by order to Cromwell, who in turn issued instructions to his well-qualified subordinates. The entire proceeding, for falsehood, violence, treachery, and violation of honour and honesty, stands without a parallel in the history of nations.

On the general character of the inquisitors' reports the Rev. Mr. Blunt says:—"It can only be remarked further, that the stories extant are most of them as untrustworthy in character as the visitors who reported them, and would not be relied on by any judicious-minded historian. They are generally like 'the un-

^s Stephens's "*Monasticon*;" Lingard, vol. iv.

derground vaults leading from priories to nunneries,' of which Fuller speaks, and of which every antiquarian knows something; 'and which' (adds Fuller) 'are confuted by the situation of the place, through rocks, improbably, and under rivers impossible to be conveyed. Such vaults at this day are to be seen in many convents, but a few paces, generally used for the conveyance of water, or sewers to carry away the filth of the house.'"

The Rev. Mr. Blunt sums up the destruction of the monastic houses in these words:—"On the whole question it may be said that we must ever look back on that destruction, as on a series of transactions in which the sorrow, the waste, the impiety, that were wrought, were enough to make angels weep. It may be true that the monastic system had worn itself out for practical good; or at least, that it was unfitted for those coming ages, which were to be so different from the ages that were past. But slaughter, desecration, and wanton destruction, were no remedies for its sins or its failings; nor was covetous rapacity the spirit of reformation. A blot and a scandal were indelibly impressed upon our history, and every bare site, every ruined gable, is still a witness to what was nothing else than a great national tragedy."

THE RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS OF OLDEN ENGLAND.

[First Part.]

THE Royal Inquisitors were aided in their proceedings by a number of clerics, who spoke with hostility of the monastic orders, on account of their constant "preaching up the extension of their own discipline to the Secular priests." The Regulars considered the Seculars inferior

in learning and theological reading. In this view the Regulars were in the right : they were likewise far more humble and zealous in the cause of religion than too many of the clerics who had charge of parochial duties. The inquisitors were also supported by some bishops and abbots, as obsequious as Dr. Kitchen, and there were deans, whose morals were little superior to those of Dr. London and Richard Layton, who understood the motives of the Royal Reformer and his Vicar-General. Some bishops and abbots, it is too true, were time-serving, indolent, selfish, and vacillating. Others again, became "timid and fearful of the King and Cromwell," but the great majority were found incapable of betraying their sacred trust from the fear or for the favours of a Court. In the enlightened present it is hard to be equitable judges of such a past. Under a capricious tyrant, priest and layman literally walked face-to-face with death. If the mind of man can forget the benignant sway of our own gentle Sovereign Queen Victoria, and the mild influences which now rule the English nation, and turn to the dark bye-gone, out of their own breasts they may absolve many an error of the time. True, there were few of the hierarchs of the ancient creed like the venerable Fisher ; but they by no means deserved the character given of them by interested traducers, whose own lives have provided the strongest evidence against belief in their statements. Many years before Cromwell's commission was issued, that uncompromising Churchman, Bishop Fisher, recommended the dissolution of two monasteries founded by the Countess of Richmond, and likewise the Hospital of St. John, for "not living according to the discipline of the order." Flagrant violations of vows

were never tolerated, and indeed, rarely existed, for there is still extant the "form of the inspection report," which Poynt describes as "cruelly severe on the weakness of the flesh." But, on the other hand, it may be inquired how far the monastic establishments would have worked in harmony with the progress of our civil institutions, or whether their number should not have been diminished. Archbishop Wareham and Sir Thomas More were of opinion that the property of many of those houses should, "upon the demise of present occupants," be transferred to the education of the people—of schools, colleges, and hospitals; but this was a policy to which the needy laity were strongly opposed. The sequel has proved their motives. Indeed Henry the Eighth's last memorable speech to Parliament almost admits that the dishonesty of the laity was the cause of the religious distractions of the kingdom.

In the early ages of the English Church, the rules for the government of the monastic houses, and to regulate their intercourse "with the world without," show that they must have rendered vast service to the people in a religious and social point of view. Drunkenness and immorality were vices they were solemnly warned to extirpate from the neighbourhood of their houses. That they carried out those rules in a signal measure, we have records to attest. But some writers contend that, in the days of the Anglo-Saxons, "ignorance and immorality were the only results of Popish teaching." Alcuin was by no means of that opinion; and Sharon Turner, writing so many centuries later, confirms the evidence of the illustrious father and scholar. The religious houses, in the Anglo-Saxon times, had much to struggle against: they were daily threatened

with fire and sword by Danes and Saxons, avid for plunder. Turner states that "it is impossible to praise too highly the benevolence of these institutions. The Anglo-Saxon priests visited grave crimes with appropriate penance—especially homicide—either voluntary or involuntary, and the intention to commit them".⁹ The public penance of a rich man, or a warrior, is thus described:—"He must lay aside his weapons, and travel barefoot a long way; nor be sheltered of a night; he must fast and watch, and pray both day and night, and willingly weary of himself, and be so careless of his dress, that the iron should not come to his hair or nails. . . . He must not enter a warm bath, nor a soft bed, nor eat flesh, nor drink anything by which he can be intoxicated; nor may he go inside of a church, but seek some holy place, and confess his guilt, and pray for intercession¹." We are informed that the rich man for a "certain sum of money" could dispense with the penance; but the foregoing is an accurate description of the "black penance" inflicted on a rich man, which no one could set aside. The records of dioceses and abbeys—some of which are still extant—ought to be a sufficient refutation of these long-standing assertions. "*Leges Edgari*," Dugdale, Stephens, Fitzherbert, Tanner, Wilkins, and Sharon Turner, chronicle many statements as to the zeal of the Anglo-Saxon clergy in promoting religion and expounding the Scriptures. No priest was without a Latin Bible, and in the monasteries a room was set aside for Scripture reading on Sundays; Kings and Queens presented illuminated Bibles to

⁹ Sharon Turner's "*Hist. of the Anglo-Saxons*," vol. iii., p. 508.

¹ "*Leges Edgari*," Wilkins, Petrie, and Soames.

abbeys and convents. Charlemagne made offerings of books to English convents², which were acknowledged with "hearty commendations."

At a synod held by Archbishop Anselm at Westminster, in 1102, it was decreed "that a married priest was to be thrown out of the privileges of his order, not allowed to say mass, and if he persevered to officiate, the people were bound not to hear him³." At later periods more stringent rules were adopted, and people were excommunicated in Salisbury and London, for "being present at mass celebrated by priests whom they knew to have broken their vows of celibacy and led bad lives." Immorality in clergymen was severely punished in those times: "but," observes an Anglo-Saxon chronicle, "the clergy were zealous and exemplary, and those who set an evil example were about one in every fifty in many years; and whenever one of them broke his vows he was immediately removed, and his place taken by a goodly father, in whose actions truth and purity shone forth." To show that a perennial light shone upon the olden Church of England we have a myriad proofs. Nine hundred years ago the following sermon was preached. Its antiquity is certified, but the name of the preacher has been lost. There are several discourses, however, to the same good purport

² In 1836, the Bible written by Alcuin, and presented by him to Charlemagne on the Christmas day of 801, was purchased in London for the British Museum. It is a large folio, containing 449 vellum leaves, and is a Latin version of St. Jerome, written in double columns, with a richly ornamented frontispiece in gold and colours, besides some smaller painted capitals. It is still, after 1070 years, in good preservation. It is bound in vellum.

³ Collier's "*Ecclesiastical Hist.*," vol. ii., p. 111.

to be found amongst the chronicles of the Saxon Church :—

“Dearest Men,—I entreat, and would humbly teach you, that you should grieve now for your sins, because in the future life our tears will tell for nought. Hear the Lord now, who invites and will grant us forgiveness. Here He is very gentle with us ; there He will be severe. Here His mild-heartedness is over us ; there will be an eternal judgment. Here is transient joy ; there will be perpetual sorrow.

“Study those things which are about to come to you. Humble yourselves here, that you be not abased hereafter. Who is so hard of heart that he cannot weep at the punishments that may succeed, and dread their occurrence ? What is better to us in this world than to be penitent for our transgressions, and to redeem them by almsgiving ? This world, and all within it, pass away, and then with our soul alone we must satisfy the Almighty God. The father cannot then help the son, nor the child the parent, but each will be judged according to his own deeds. O man ! what are you doing ? Be not like the dumb cattle. O think and remember how great a separation the Deity has placed between us and them. He sends us an understanding soul, but they have none. Watch, then, O man ! Pray and entreat while thou may. Remember that for thee the Lord descended from the high Heaven to the most lowly state, that He might raise thee to that exalted life. Gold and silver cannot aid us from those grim and cruel torments, from those flames that will never be extinguished, and from those serpents that never die. There they are whetting their bloody teeth, to wound and tear our bodies without mercy, when the great

trumpet shall sound, and the dreadful voice exclaim, 'Arise, and behold the mighty and the terrible King. You that have been stedfast and are chosen, arise. To your Heavenly Master come. Now you shall see Him whom you loved before you became dust. Come, and partake of a glory which no eye has seen, and no ear has heard of. But, you wicked and impious, arise you, and fall abandoned into that deep and infernal pit, where misery for ever must be your happiness and honour.'

"O! how miserable and joyless will those become who neglected the divine commandments, to hear this fearful sentence. Always should these things be before your eyes. Where are the Kings that once triumphed, and all the mighty of the earth? Where are their treasures? Where is their splendid apparel? Oh, for how short a life are they now brought to an endless death! For what a transient glory have they earned a lasting sorrow. How paltry the profit for which they have bought these wretched torments. How momentary was the laughter that has been changed to these bitter and burning tears⁴!"

Hermits who lived in woods were revered by the people. The lives of those men were full of toil and privation; and the historians of the Anglo-Saxon times consider that they "rendered service to the world without." Amongst those philosophic hermits, was Billfrith, who lived about the time of Alfred. Sharon Turner allows that the time of the Anglo-Saxon hermits, or anchorites, was not unprofitably employed. "We have," he says, "a splendid proof in the Anglo-Saxon

⁴ Wilkins; "*Leges Edgari*," 173, 174; *Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church*;" Sharon Turner's "*Hist. of the Anglo-Saxons*," vol. iii.

MS. of the Gospels in the British Museum (D. 4), which was produced by Billfrith, the anchorite." Wanley calls this book "an incomparable specimen of Anglo-Saxon calligraphy." Billfrith is mentioned by his Saxon coadjutor, Aldred, to have ornamented his book with gold and silver and precious gems. Turgot, another Anglo-Saxon scholar, declares Billfrith to have been in *aurificii arte præcipuus*. The Anglo-Saxon hermits felt a pervading fear that the days of Anti-Christ were at hand, and when the people assembled to hear them preach, "the discourse had a powerful effect on the multitude, who considered them as men specially called by God." The monks and nuns of those times also produced many edifying and interesting poems, which were read to the people on holidays and other appointed times. There is at present in the Cathedral library at Exeter, a volume of those poems, which were presented to the diocese by its first bishop, Leofric. Some of the MSS. deposited at Exeter were published some forty years ago by the Antiquarian Society. There is still a number of ancient documents in the archives of Exeter Cathedral, which have never been published, as the Anglican bishops take little interest in such matters; but it is to be hoped that Dr. Temple may become the exception to the rule. In Winchester Cathedral, likewise, are to be found many important MS. records, which, when published, will throw much light upon the Catholic history of that diocese.

In the ninth century the children of wealthy foreigners came to England to be educated. England, at that period, was celebrated throughout the world for the learning of the schools established by Theodorus and

Hadrian⁵. English maidens of the noblest families went to the wildest districts of Germany to seek out children of their own sex and "lead them in the ways of the Cross." This feeling was imparted to English women from their residence in the religious houses of Ireland, of whose sisterhoods Thorndale remarks, "The look and expression of those goodly women turned many thieves and wicked men from their evil life." Roger Hoveden draws a naturally quaint but interesting picture of the condition of the monastic houses in the days of the Heptarchy, and the veneration in which they were held by the people. The rule of "discipline and government" severally adopted by the Anglo-Saxon houses, was that of St. Benedict. It is pleasant to find Sharon Turner expressing his approval of St. Benedict's cloister rules. "It is impossible," he says, "to read the rules laid down by St. Benedict without perceiving that it was the product of a mind aiming to do what seemed wisest and best⁶."

The abbots were in some districts men of greater importance than bishops. On learned subjects, Scripture, history, antiquities, and science, they were consulted. They had also many exclusive privileges: for instance, an abbot had the power of creating a knight, "where he found a squire of unblemished honour, and a faithful son of the Church." This had been an Anglo-Saxon practice, but one which St. Anselm did not approve, for the 13th canon of the synod he held at Westminster, forbade the privilege of

⁵ "Archbishops of Canterbury," vol. i., p. 237; also Milman, ii., p. 280.

⁶ Sharon Turner's "History of the Anglo-Saxons," vol. iii., p. 493.

knighthood by abbots or any other clerics'. The Abbot of Battle Abbey had a special charter from Henry I., "conferring the power of making knights under certain rules and conditions." And King John conferred a similar power on the Abbot of Reading, which was once exercised under particular circumstances, the knighthood being conferred on a French physician who performed some "wonderful cure." But those privileges were seldom exercised. An abbot had also the right of hunting, and a parish priest was permitted to hunt for six days in the year, but he was commanded to give the game he killed on *five* days to the poor of his parish, and "keep the remainder for his own belly-cheer." These privileges were all subsequently set aside by synods. The rule of St. Benedict prohibited monks, or other men under religion, to keep dogs, hawks, chess-boards, or dice. "In the absence of books, relievments like these," states Crétineau (quoted by Rapin de Thoyras), "*les jeunes moines tour-à-tour se jouaient, mais pas pour longtemps, et se réfugiaient devant les aînés. Mais ces jeux n'étaient que des plus innocens.*"

The first abbey founded in England was at Bangor in 560; in France, at Poitiers, about 360; in Ireland in the fifth century, and in Scotland in the sixth. According to Salmon, 100 monasteries were suppressed in England in 1414, by Henry V., who wanted their income to carry on his wars with France. Tanner gives the following statistics concerning the religious houses at the general confiscation in 1539:—186 large monasteries (revenue, 104,919*l.* 13*s.* 3*d.*), 374 lesser monasteries (revenue, 33,479*l.* 13*s.* 7½*d.*), and 48 houses of

7 Collier's "Ecclesiastical History," vol. ii., p. 113.

the Knights Hospitallers (revenue, 2,385*l.* 12*s.* 8*d.*) ; total :—houses, 608 ; revenue, 140,784*l.* 19*s.* 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.*

St. Benedict (who lived 480—543) founded the illustrious order of the Benedictines. He introduced the monastic life into Western Europe in 529, when he founded the monastery on Monte Casino, in Campania, and eleven others subsequently. His “*Regula Monachorum*” soon became the general rule of Western monachism. No religious order has been so remarkable for extent, wealth, and men of note and learning, as the Benedictine. Amongst its branches the chief were the Cistercians, founded in 1098, and reformed by St. Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, in 1116, at which abbey died St. Bernard’s friend, the exiled and sainted Archbishop of Dublin—St. Laurence O’Toole ; and the Carthusians from the Chartreux (hence the Charterhouse), founded by St. Bruno about 1084. The Benedictine order was introduced into England by Augustin in 596, and William the Conqueror built in 1067 an abbey for the order on the plain where he fought the victorious battle of Hastings in 1066. It was named “Battle Abbey,” dedicated to St. Martin of Tours, and the Benedictines were to pray for the souls of the slain. The original name of the plain was Hetheland. William de Warrenne, Earl of Warrenne, founded a Benedictine convent at Lewes, in Sussex, in 1077. Leigh tells us of a nunnery at Hammersmith, “whose inmates are denominated Benedictine dames.”

The Benedictines have been regarded the most zealous order of Religious known in the Catholic Church, and the Church in all ages esteemed them—a proof of which is to be found in the number of their order who filled the highest clerical dignities for centuries. Pope

John XXII., who reigned from 1316 to 1334, caused an inquiry to be made into the history of the Benedictines, which shows that the order gave to the Church, up to that period, twenty-four Popes, 200 Cardinals, 700 Archbishops, 5000 Bishops, 1500 Abbots—many of whom were celebrated for theological, scientific, and historic knowledge⁸. “As to their monasteries,” says Stephens, “it is almost impossible to ascertain their numbers.” According to a Spanish work⁹ they were computed, up to the period named, at 37,000.

From 715 to 1039 eleven Emperors resigned their sceptres and became Benedictine monks; and from 515 to 1147 twenty European Kings retired to Benedictine houses to end their days; from 613 to 1290, ten Empresses laid down their imperial diadems to assume the Benedictine veil; from 662 to 1010 twelve Queens retired to Benedictine cloisters—four of those Queens were English;—princesses, youthful and beautiful, relinquished imperial marriages and joined the order, becoming the humblest among the sisterhoods of the Cross; and numberless women of learning and noble birth followed the same vocation. Noblemen, statesmen, and warriors, who had for years distinguished themselves in the world’s affairs, retired in the evening of an eventful life to this “Goschen of God, which

⁸ Baronius reckons as members of this order, 40 Popes, 200 Cardinals, 50 Patriarchs, 116 Archbishops, 4600 Bishops, 4 Emperors, 12 Empresses, 46 Kings, 41 Queens, and 3600 Saints; St. Benedict, the founder, being the first canonized.

⁹ “*Tabella Rerum illustrium Ordinis Sanctissimi Benedicti.*” This book was printed at Salamanca in 1567. In vol. i., p. 165-6 of Stephens’s “*Monastie Houses,*” is chronicled a list of the Pontiffs that were of the order of St. Benedict; together with some biographical sketches of those hierarchs.

enjoyed its own light and calm, amidst darkness and storms."

Haydn, a learned though prejudiced investigator, writes:—"The Benedictines have taken little part in politics, but have produced many valuable works—especially the Congregation of St. Maur, who published the celebrated '*L'Art de Vérifier les Dates*,' in 1750, and edited many ancient authors."

To return to the monastic inquisition and its results. If abuses did exist in the monasteries before Cromwell's inquisition, they were not ignored by the Legislature, episcopacy, higher members of the clergy, and nobility. On the 30th of July, 1530, a document was drawn up by Parliament, addressed to the Pope, on the "misconduct of the clergy and the abuses of the Church." This "petition" to his Holiness was signed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, four bishops, twenty-two abbots, two dukes, two marquises, thirteen earls, twenty-five barons, and eleven knights¹. This inquiry was thrown aside for ever by the rapacious movements of Cromwell, hastened by the avidity of the King. The Rev. Launcelot Pomeroy, who was a bitter enemy to the Church of Rome, states "that the fact of twenty-two abbots demanding an investigation into the character of those over whom they presided, is a strong argument in favour of their innocence." "It is almost impossible," he continues, "that men of such high character and severe discipline could have been privy to the crimes attributed to the monastic houses. However we may abhor Popery, we must give the monks and nuns credit for the virtues which they really possessed."

¹ See Parry's "*Parliament of England*."

Dean Hook's opinion as to the moral character of the clergy, regular and secular, at this period, is important, as confirming the evidence of Maitland, Brewer, Hugo, Blunt, and the Camden Society. The Dean remarks, that they (the clergy) were not attacked on the ground of immorality. "That there were," he says, "cases of gross immorality could be produced when reference was made to the life and conduct of 10,000 or 12,000 men is not to be doubted; but these must be regarded as exceptional cases. At all events, as a body, they were not arraigned²."

The administrative condition of the Ecclesiastical Courts attracted particular attention at this period. Archbishop Wareham and Sir Thomas More were earnest in their demand for a reform of those tribunals; the chapters and deans spoke of their "vested rights;" Wareham would maintain the privileges and rights of the clergy, but was determined at the same time to remove the abuses complained of by the people. Wareham's policy was to adapt those courts to the circumstances of the times. He was conservative in everything that had a tendency to be useful or good; and, in the true spirit of the Catholic Church, he would reform, but not destroy. He appointed Dean Collett to address the secular clergy on the subject of Church discipline. Collett's discourse is a remarkable document. In the words of a distinguished ecclesiastic of the time (Dr. Whyte), "it struck at the conscience of the Seculars, and many of them put on sackcloth and ashes, and ceased to be so greedy for the things of this

² "Archbishops of Canterbury," vol. iv., p. 382

world³." Towards the close of Wareham's life he did much to effect a reform in the ecclesiastical courts under his own jurisdiction. He reduced fees very considerably, and set aside many of the claims so long put forward by the clergy of "certain manors to fees and other local taxes." If the Seculars had taken the advice of Sir Thomas More, the King and Lord Cromwell could have had no pretext to interfere with their rights, but a long career of prosperity had engendered a false feeling of security; they would not hear the ominous mutterings of the coming storm⁴.

When it suited the King's whim, or what he chose to designate his policy, he applied to Parliament for an Act to make his confiscations legal. Posterity have been assured that the Commons "complied with the sovereign's request, with many thanks for his goodly and pious work." This is not an accurate statement. Venal and obsequious as the Commons were at this period, they hesitated; and many boldly expressed their abhorrence of the monastic confiscation. The debates were renewed again and again; and "even corrupt members" spoke in pathetic language of those institutions, where their wives and daughters were educated; others told Sir Thomas Audley that they "would not believe in Lord Cromwell's report, because they knew

³ A reference to Collett's "Discourse to the Clergy," has been made in the chapter on Bishop Fisher.

⁴ For particulars concerning the Ecclesiastical Courts, see Lynwood, 170; Ibid. 181; Register of Archbishop Mepham; also Archbishop Stratford; Statute of Edward III. i. c. 4; More and Wareham's Correspondence on the Ecclesiastical Courts; Correspondence of Erasmus on the same subject; Bayley's Life of Fisher; Collier, Wilkins, and Joyce; "Archbishops of Canterbury," vols. vi. and vii.

that the men who furnished it swore like dicing folk, and cared not what they said." Burnet and Hume contend that Parliament agreed to the proposed measures "without any hesitation," but there are records and chronicles extant which conclusively prove the contrary. Spelman is cited as an "honest Protestant historian" by Hume, where it suits his purpose. Spelman's "*History of Sacrilege*," however, affirms what is to be found in the State records as to the disinclination of Parliament to co-operate with the King's views of confiscation. Spelman says, "The bill stuck long in the Lower House, and could get no passage, when the King commanded the Commons to attend him in the forenoon in his gallery, where he let them wait till late in the afternoen, and then, coming out of his chamber, walking a turn or two amongst them, and looking angrily on them, first on one side, then on the other, at last said, 'I hear' (saith he), 'that my bill will not pass; but I will have it pass, or I will have some of your heads;' and, without other rhetoric, returned to his chamber. Enough was said; the bill passed, and all was given him as he desired⁵."

Outside the walls of Parliament, the "lamentations of the people for this fiat against the religious houses were loud and frequent." Heretofore the English labourer, seldom at any period of the year felt the pangs of hunger. Those who were reduced to want, knew where to apply for and find timely succour, delicately administered; the widow and orphan were cherished as "God's own;" in fact, all whom reverse of fortune reduced to need were enabled, in some

⁵ Spelman's "*Hist. of Sacrilege*;" Collier; Thorndale.

measure, to recover themselves; all who needed it were relieved, without, as afterwards, being branded as paupers, lashed, or imprisoned. It was no wonder that discontent began to spread far and wide throughout the land. The Venerable Bede has left upon record his opinion as to monastic property—that “it was intended by the donors for the nourishment of the poor, the relief of the fatherless, and to give hospitality to the stranger.”

Burnet admits that some “base arts” were used to fill up the “black book” with the crimes of religious persons. Dugdale declares that “many of the religious houses, condemned for crime, at the very same time stood high for morality, piety, and charity.” It is an important fact, that in the “first visitation” of the monastic houses it was said that “crime and immorality were only to be found in the lesser monasteries, that all attempts to reform them were in vain, that the inmates should be sent to the larger houses, where they may be compelled to live religiously.” The report then describes the larger monasteries thus:—“Wherein, thanks be to God, religion is well kept and observed¹.” This opinion was endorsed by the King and both houses of Parliament; but a very short period elapsed when they held the contrary and more convenient opinion. The houses wherein “religion was well kept and observed,” became “pest-houses” when the produce of the plunder of the lesser monasteries was found wholly insufficient for the greed of Henry. The amount of property seized and confiscated by the first visitation, paved the way for the second. The agents were “judiciously selected,” and they proceeded

¹ See Collier, part ii., p. 113-114.

to educe that "black book," which Dr. Burnet would have posterity to accept as a statement of facts. Bishop Fisher in Convocation denounced the seizure of the smaller monasteries, and in an expressive allegory indicated the motives and predicted the results. He told the bishops and abbots that if they gave permission to the Crown to destroy the smaller monasteries, it might possibly lead to the destruction of the larger ones. "An axe" (he remarks), "which wanted a handle, came upon a time into the wood, making his moan to the great trees, that he wanted a handle to work withal, and for that cause he was constrained to sit idle; therefore he made his request to them, that they would be pleased to grant him one of their small saplings within the wood to make him a handle. But now becoming a complete axe, he so fell to work within the same wood, that, in process of time, there was neither great nor small trees to be found in the place where the wood stood. And so, my lords, if you grant the King these smaller monasteries, you do but make him a handle, whereby, at his own pleasure, he may cut down all the cedars within your Lebanon²." Hume can scarcely conceal his opinion of the King and his monastic commissioners. He observes:—"During times of faction, especially of the religious kind, no equity is to be expected from adversaries; and as it was known, that the King's intentions in this visitation was to find a pretence for abolishing monasteries, *we may naturally conclude, that the reports of the commissioners are very little to be relied on.* Friars were encouraged to bring in information against their brethren; the slightest evidence was credited; and even the calumnies spread

² Bayley's "Life of Bishop Fisher," p. 108.

abroad by the friends to the Reformation were regarded as grounds of proof." And again he says, "In order to prepare men for the innovations projected, the report of the visitors was published, and a general horror was endeavoured to be excited in the nation against institutions which, to their ancestors, had been the objects of the most profound veneration."

A scene occurred between Sir Thomas Seymour and King Henry, which affords one of the many proofs on record of the meanness and dishonesty of the laity. Sir Thomas Seymour was a gentleman of the King's Privy Chamber, and, like his brother, Lord Hertford, received a portion of the monastic property; but his selfish spirit craved for more. He accordingly made a statement to his royal master to the effect "that Archbishop Cranmer was amassing wealth for his family; that the revenues of the See were more extensive than his Highness imagined; and, as the King wanted money, he might conjecture where and how it might be procured at Croydon." King Henry had, however, already sent his secret spies to examine into the condition of Archbishop Cranmer's financial affairs; and discovering that Sir Thomas Seymour's allegations were false, immediately charged him with the "fabrication of a malicious lie;" "that he was actuated by unworthy motives and wished to gain another grant of Church lands." Seymour prostrated himself before the monarch, confessing the falsehood of his charges, and imploring forgiveness. "Ah, Sir" (said the King), "I now perceive which way the wind bloweth. There are a sort of you whom I have liberally given of suppressed monasteries, which, as you have lightly gotten, so you have unthriftilly spent; some at dice, others in

gay apparel, and others again in a worse way I fear; and now, when all is gone, you would fain have me make another *chevisance* (gratuity) of the bishops' lands, to satisfy your greedy appetites."

It is recorded in the Privy Purse Expenses of Henry VIII. that Edward Seymour, the brother of Sir Thomas Seymour, had won 300*l.* at dice in one night from the King. That he won it fairly is questionable, for the Seymours have been described as the greatest cheats and gamblers who frequented the Court. Surely the Reformation did not turn into a more commendable channel of expenditure the resources which had previously been mainly spent in the maintenance of the poor.

"It must be confessed" (writes Collier) "there were several shocking circumstances in the reign of Henry the Eighth and his children. To see churches pulled down, or rifled, the plate swept off the altar, and holy furniture converted to common uses, has no great air of devotion. To see the choir undressed to make the drawing-room and bed-chamber fine, was not very primitive at first view. The forced surrender of abbeys, the maiming of bishoprics, &c., are apt to puzzle the vulgar capacity. But unless a man's understanding is more than ordinarily improved, he will be at a loss to reconcile these measures with Christian maxims, and make them fall in with conscience and Reformation³." This Protestant divine refers to the scenes of 1561, when Elizabeth was scarcely three years on the throne:—"To behold noble structures, consecrated to the honour of the ever blessed Trinity, where all the Articles of the Apostles' Creed were professed, ravaged

³ Ecclesiastical History, part ii., p. 163.

and razed, the furniture made plunder, and the Church estate seized, gives a frightful idea of some of the Reformers⁴.” “Lord Cromwell’s mode of acting was diabolical,” says Dean Hook, “and our authority for saying so is not Saunders or any other Romish partizan, but an honest blunt partizan who would never wilfully deceive, however much he might be deceived himself. Fuller speaks strongly and like a true-hearted Christian, when he describes as a ‘devilish and damnable act,’ the system which was adopted for the seduction and corruption of nuns by the very persons who were fiercely denouncing monastic institutions, on account of their presumed immorality. Unprincipled young men were sent as visitors to a nunnery, and if any of them succeeded in winning the affections of an unsuspecting girl, he sought Cromwell’s favour by basely accusing her of incontinence. Of their many repulses no mention was made, though by the confession of one *diabolus* made in after life, we know that, when men had sold themselves to the father of lies, and had sworn allegiance to the accuser of their brethren, innocence itself was no safeguard or protection. The tempter and another young man went to a nunnery within twelve miles of Cambridge. They represented themselves as brothers, and their dress pointed them out as men of rank. Arriving late at night, they were not admitted within the walls of the convent, but were supplied with refreshments in one of the out-houses. Here they found straw sufficient for one night’s rest to the travellers, and a supply of food. In the morning they paid their respects to the lady abbess, and tendered their thanks for the cautious hospitality which had been accorded

⁴ Ecclesiastical History, part ii., p. 471.

them. They produced a forged document, by which it was made appear that they were appointed visitors of monasteries under a royal commission. To execute their commission, in examining the accounts and taking note of the property, they were for several days partakers of the hospitalities of the house ; they resorted to all the arts of fashionable life to corrupt the younger nuns. *They entirely failed* ; but they had the baseness, after they had left the house, to make report ‘that nothing but their weariness bounded their wantonness.’ The conscience of one of those wretched beings reproached him in old age, but he made a confession too late to undo the evil of which he had been the cause, or to restore to society and peace of mind the unhappy victims of his calumny. Amongst the falsehoods freely circulated, were those which related to the existence of underground passages, leading from friaries to nunneries, for the clandestine convenience of those who hated the light because their deeds were evil. But this application of the sewers, which are found upon examination to have gone no further than the exigencies of drainage required, is now known to have originated in men, who, whatever may have been their zeal against Popery, had forgotten that among deadly sins falsehood is one, and that among Christian virtues the charity which thinketh no evil is the first⁵.” The Dean thus describes the result of the disruption and confiscation of the nunneries :—“It was with sad and sorrowing hearts that the pious of either sex heard of the demolition of the holy and beautiful house where their fathers had worshipped ; and mothers were seen weeping as they received back their unmarried daughters from

⁵ “Archbishops of Canterbury,” vol. vi.

nunneries which had been to them a happy home. It was with feelings of indignant sympathy that the people of a district saw turned adrift upon the world the holy women who had been to them sisters of charity."

The right of granting "corrodies," a privilege of nominating a certain number of persons, "younger brothers," or decayed servants of the local gentry or nobles, to a home in a monastic house, subsequently supplied a cause of accusation to the despoilers of the monasteries, and proved most injurious to the reputation of those establishments, because those persons were seldom if ever reduced to the discipline of the order. They were in many instances lazy, talentless offshoots of aristocratic families, devoid of education or energy; and the "old servants," too, like most of their class in those days, spent their time in retailing stories of the chase, the barbaric festivity of the castle, or the charms of the baron's daughters. Such people should never have become the inmates of a house of religious seclusion. Besides, they were almost unfit for any occupation. When the time came for Lord Cromwell's inquiry, this class of men were artfully returned as "profligate monks," although the Commissioners themselves were well aware that those whom they denounced were not bound by vows.

King Henry borrowed, or rather extorted 2000*l.* from the Abbey of Faversham; but this did not satisfy the royal acquisitiveness, for the inquisitors came and "carried away all that was worth taking." John Shapely, the abbot, appealed to Cromwell's "sense of justice and religion," in a pathetic letter. But the petition of the abbot, who is described by the inquisitors as one of the "putrefied old oaks," was treated as the

passing wind. He was seventy-eight years of age, having spent nearly sixty years within the walls of the abbey; he had more courage than some of his brethren, and said he would not "leave that quiet, holy abode, until they put him out; he had committed no crime against the King or the realm; he worked hard all his life for the care of the souls and bodies of the people; and brought divers wicked sinners back unto the ways of peace and charity; he would not surrender to man that which Christ's Church had conferred on him." In another letter to Cromwell, he says:—"The chief office of an abbot is to live chaste and solitary; to be separated from the intermeddling of worldly things, to serve God quietly, to distribute alms in His name for the purpose of refreshing the poor, the indigent, and the unfortunate; to have a vigilant eye to the good order and rule of His house, and the flock committed to his charge by God Almighty, To fast, to watch, to pray, to succour the poor, and to reclaim the wicked, is the vow and mission we have pledged to Heaven to perform. Are we to be destroyed for attempting to carry out these solemn pledges made to the Court of Heaven⁶?" "But when the crash came at last," writes the Rev. Mr. Blunt, "the good old abbot was driven out of the monastery which he had ruled for forty years, and in which he had perhaps spent the whole of his adult life." The sad history of the Abbot of Faversham is but one amongst hundreds.

Sebastian Newdigate, one of the Carthusian monks, was hanged and quartered at Tyburn in 1535. He died in company with William Exmew, a distinguished Greek scholar of Christ's College, Cambridge. Father

⁶ Tanner, Stephens, Willis, Dugdale, and Blunt.

Newdigate's offence was that of denying the King's supremacy. He is described by Dr. Whyte as "a zealous priest, a man of refined taste in various ways, and gave much of his time to the charitable labours of reclaiming the fallen." He was member of an old Warwickshire family. Judging by the present use made of the name, Father Newdigate would have been more aptly burned at Smithfield in a subsequent reign.

The friars of Scarborough were known to be very poor, and therefore scarcely worth the notice of the Commissioners, yet what little they possessed was seized and confiscated. The "brothers" were ordered to "depart thence in twenty-four hours." A friar named Aldgate carried away four chalices, one of which had been presented by Archbishop Langton; Cromwell's "messengers," who had by this time an inventory of their effects, missed the chalices; Aldgate was arrested and charged with "stealing that which belonged to the King." He was sentenced to be hanged on the following day, but being confined in a cold damp apartment, without fuel, food, or bed, he was found on the next morning dead. The execution of an abbot, "here and there," was continued for the purpose of striking terror into the monks and friars; and the effect of the panic caused the death of no less than sixteen nuns in one week, all old and infirm women, "for whose demise," a contemporary says there was "loud wailing from the maidens and women." In 1539 two successive Abbots of Colchester were executed; and also the good and amiable Abbot of Reading, who was so much beloved by the inhabitants of Berkshire⁷.

⁷ Stephens, Thorndale, Blunt.

For the present we take leave of the Religious Institutions of Olden England, postponing a further account of them to a second volume, in order to notice here the thoughtless and fallacious statements which have so long passed for history amongst English adults, and even as school-teaching for English youth. We shall feebly essay to answer the question—

WHAT WERE THE LABOURS OF THE CHURCH IN THE
“DARK AGES?”

THE Catholic Church, in all ages, was famed for its culture of music and architecture. Archbishops Anselm and Lanfranc are all well known to have been not alone architects themselves, but the liberal patrons of that noble art in England. The beautiful hymns of the ancient Church have proved a mine for imitative appropriation to all modern beliefs. The cultivation of music refined and chastened the manners of those who pursued it; and the sublime and solemn harmony used at divine service elevated the soul and softened the heart of the worshipper. Did the vandalism which denounced and destroyed this lofty and beautiful adjunct of divine worship better a subsequent race? Mr. William Chappell, the distinguished musical antiquarian, in the introduction to his first volume of the “Roxburghe Ballads,” published 1871, remarks earnestly, how “in England, Scotland, and Holland, the extreme Puritanism that put an end to the school of music in each country, was followed by a *progressive increase of drunkenness, with its attendant vices and crimes*. The great Dutch school of music of the

fifteenth century was silenced by the Huguenot iconoclasts—stifled in blood and rapine—and has never revived. The speciality of the monks of the earlier ages was their ingenuity in making bridges; and so beneficial was this art, that one of the valued titles of the Supreme Pontiff was “Pontifex Maximus.” Looking to the scientific data, accumulated by the religious, the catalogue is significant and brilliant. In 664 glass was invented by Benalt, a monk. The mighty agent, whose varied processes and evolvments now rule the material world, was discovered by Schwartz, a monk of Cologne, who also invented artillery, some rude pieces of which won for Edward the Third the marvellous victory of Cresci; Roger Bacon, a monk, discovered the telescope. Through Marchena, a monk, Columbus, after vainly seeking patronage at the Courts of Lisbon and Madrid, was enabled to go forth on his first voyage, to add the mightier division of a virgin world to the restricted cosmos of antecedent geography. The matchless “*De Revolutionibus*,” of Copernicus, in which were first propounded the principles of the heliocentric system, was published at the expense of Gisio, a monk, and likewise Bishop of Eremeland. By the way, in the fine old Cathedral of Thorn, in Poland, on the tomb of the great Slavonian astronomer, appears an epitaph, written by himself, which manifests what may be called without paradox, the sublime humility of a true Christian heart:—

“Non gloriam Pauli humilis posco,
Nec veniam Petri peccator oro;
At quod ILLE ex ligno crucis dederat latroni,
Sedulus oro.”

Which, for the convenience of some readers, may be translated :—

“Not the glory of Paul do I, humble one, ask; nor the pardon of Peter do I, a sinner, beg; but that which from the wood of the cross HE vouchsafed unto the Thief, do I eagerly beseech.”

Do we not owe the “*Divina Commedia*” to the genius of a monk, whose portraiture of the just and consoling doctrine of Purgatory, forms the finest portion of the poem? Was not St. Jerome a monk—whose voice was more potent far than the trumpets which levelled the walls of Jericho, for at its sound voluptuaries started from their orgies, the patrician revellers rose from the benches of the amphitheatre, and the feats of athletes, and the struggles of gladiators were forgotten? Was not the golden-mouthed Chrysostom also a “religious?” In the Court of Charlemagne, amidst the heroic paladins of that great conqueror, amidst groups resplendent in all the bravery of wealth and honours, walked, most honoured of all, the plain and simple English monk, the ambassador of the Mercian Offa—Alcuin, the glory of Charlemagne, who, himself unpossessed of much learning, had those far better gifts in an Emperor—a desire for its extension and respect for its professors^s. Again, on the banks of the Tyne, in the pleasant seclusion of Jarrow, wrote his chronicles that glorious old monk, the father

^s Alcuin, or Albinus Flaccus, was a pupil of the Venerable Bede. He was sent on an embassy to Charlemagne by the great Heptarch, Offa, King of Mercia, and is said to have taught the Emperor rhetoric, logic, and divinity. He died at Tours in 840, and was buried in the church, whose ruins are still pointed out in that fine old cathedral city, and in which, four centuries before, St. Patrick is said to have been ordained by St. Martin of Tours.

of English history—the Venerable Bede. But we must cease, for the catalogue is inexhaustible.

It is absurd and unreasonable to stigmatize the Catholic Church for not having enlightened the minds of the multitude by education. As facile it would be to square the circle, or establish perpetual motion—until such time as printing was invented. And were not the first printers Catholics? The printing press was not dreamt of, even when Laurentius of Haarlem first constructed in 1430 his clumsy wooden type. It is plain to every mind unswayed by falsehood and prejudice, that, until the discovery of printing, the enlightenment of the population by effectual education was impossible. Instead of being grateful to the residents of the olden monasteries for the priceless benefits bestowed upon mankind by their noble and thankless industry, anti-Catholic writers cavil at them because they did not achieve impossibilities. But who were they who preserved the treasures of learning, and extended it by their pens, until by the means of printing the long-cherished riches of ancient learning were diffused throughout the world? As far as scholarship, unaided by the ingenuity of Guttenburg and his typographical brethren, could promote education, the scholarship of the beneficent hierophants of Christianity was extended. The monasteries were academies, the monks the teachers; and all the eloquence of the Fathers, and the wisdom of the Hellenic philosophers found able and kindly expositors in those schools. If Protestantism chanced to be produced contemporaneously with printing, the schism of Luther can only claim that it used, with considerable noise, an invention not its own. In fact, in England, the “new learning,”

while confiscating the property of the monasteries, nearly monopolised the use of printing, which soon became a dangerous indulgence to a persecuted creed.

The Catholic Church, too, has done more for art and taste, in what has been called the "Dark Ages," than all human institutions put together. The Church, indeed, is distinguished from all others aspiring to the title, by the magnificence, the loveliness, the profusion, and the grandeur by which she is environed. Her ceremonies have educated, and are still eliciting, all the skill of ingenuity, all the riches of art, all the brightest results of imaginative effort. She has wrought all the mines of thought and matter, to manifest her absorbing reverence for the Omnipotent. She inspired the architect to display the resources of his skill, and basilicas arose, attesting with their solemn domes the sublime ardour of a God-loving people. She summoned to her aid the noblest forms of sculpture, the passion and the glory, the fearful and the benignant revelations of painting, the entrancing and resplendent masterpieces of music. All gifts and all arts she led with gentle but invincible suasion to the footstool of the Eternal. The vessels employed in her sacrifices, were composed of the most precious metals, decorated with gems, and fashioned by such magic artificers as Benvenuto Cellini. Her tabernacles blazed with diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphires, amethysts, opals, and pearls. Her altars, barred with lapis lazuli, costlier than the gold of Ophir, and wrung from the depths of the Ural, bloomed with flowers, which likewise strewn the paths of her processions. Incense floated heavenwards from the swing of her thuribles. Cloth of gold composed her vestments, and cloth of silver formed the banners upon

which were embroidered the mementoes of her saints. Poetry was brought into the sacred service; and the hymns of the Church, realizing the conception of Tennyson, "perfect music set to noble words," are exemplars of solemn beauty. Oratory poured from her pulpits for instruction, supplication, or admonition—such eloquence as flowed from the lips of Bossuet, of Bourdaloue, of Fenelon, and of Massillon, the latter of whom, unlike the Anglican Bishop Burnet, who paltered to the wickedness of the licentious Charles, denounced, in the face of the Court, the delinquencies of Louis XIV., his courtiers, and his courtesans. Again, so abhorred in the estimation of the Church was idleness, that even the hermits of the deserts, and those recluses in monasteries, unfitted for higher employments, toiled unceasingly in the pauses of their prayers. The Church requires no vindication respecting her earnestness in aiding the advancement of knowledge, and in exciting intellectual emulation. The witnesses who have testified to the contrary are now reduced to the number of the consciously false. The Catholic Church is emphatically her own vindication. By the amplitude and perennial beauty of her sacred edifices, by the melody of her matchless ritual, by the labours of her illustrious writers, by the voices of her eloquent dignitaries; by the music which floats amidst her cathedral arches; by the signs of the life-giving influence by which her apostles are ever accompanied throughout the earth, strewing, as it were, the most barren sands with flowers and verdure; by her immense and immutable dominion—a domination whose extent and permanence would render the perpetuation of ignorance amongst her children an impossibility, supposing such were amongst

her wishes ; by the revelations of her magnificent history ; by the principles of her creed ; and, by the wisdom of her many eminent councils, the Catholic Church is triumphantly vindicated from the imputation of hostility to knowledge. Not only has the Church been the preserver of learning and knowledge in the past, but she has been the patroness of more recent intelligence, and the instigator of modern enterprise. Look only at her missionary labours. What region of the earth is not full of them—full of the works of men who impart, in felicitous concurrence, divine wisdom and human intelligence ?

END OF VOL. I.



